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D R A M A S.

VOL. III.

LONDON :
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D R A M A S,

BY

J O A N N A B A I L L I E.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

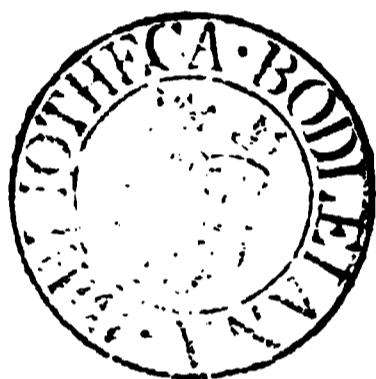
VOL. III.

LONDON:

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PATERNOSTER-ROW.**

1836.

430.



WITCHCRAFT:
A TRAGEDY IN PROSE.

IN FIVE ACTS.

VOL. III.

B

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

ROBERT KENNEDY OF DUNGARREN (*commonly called DUNGARREN*).

MURREY.

RUTHERFORD, *Minister of the Parish.*

FATHERINGHAM, *Friend of Murrey.*

THE SHERIFF OF RENFREWSHIRE.

THE BAILLIE OR MAGISTRATE OF PAISLEY.

BLACK BAWLDY, *the Herdboy of Dungarren.*

ANDERSON, *the principal Domestic of Dungarren.*

WILKIN, *an Idiot.*

Crowd, Jailor, Landlord, &c.

WOMEN.

LADY DUNGARREN (*commonly so called*), *Mother of Robert Kennedy.*

VIOLET, *Daughter of Murrey.*

ANNABELLA, *the rich Relation of Lady Dungarren.*

GRIZELD BANE,

MARY MACMURREN, } *reputed Witches.*

ELSPY LOW,

PEMEY, *Maid to Annabella.*

Nurse, Maidservants, Crowd, &c.

Scene in Renfrewshire, in Scotland.

WITCHCRAFT.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Parlour in the House or Tower of Dungarren.*

Enter LADY DUNGARREN *and* ANNABELLA, *by different sides.*

ANNABELLA.

You must be surprised, my dear cousin, at my unexpected return.

LADY DUNGARREN.

I will frankly confess that I am. How did you find your friends in Glenrowan?

ANNABELLA.

With their house full of disagreeable visitors and discomfort: another day of it would have cast me into a fever; so I will trespass on your hospitality a week longer, knowing how kindly disposed you have always been to the child of your early friend.

LADY DUNGARREN.

It would be strange, indeed, if the daughter of Duncan Gordon were not welcome here.

ANNABELLA.

How has poor Jessie been since I left you?

LADY DUNGARREN (*shaking her head*).

I have but a sorrowful account to give of her.

ANNABELLA.

Had she any rest last night? Does she look as wildly as she did? Were any strange noises heard in the chamber during the night?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Ay; noises that made me start and tremble, and feel a horrid consciousness that some being or other was in the room near me, though to the natural eye invisible.

ANNABELLA.

What kind of sounds were they? Why did you think they were so near you?

LADY DUNGARREN.

I was sitting by the table, with my head resting on my hand, when the door leading from the back staircase, which I am certain I had bolted in the evening, burst open.

ANNABELLA.

And what followed?

LADY DUNGARREN.

I verily thought to see some elrich form or other make its appearance, and I sat for some moments rivetted to my chair, without power to move hand or foot, or almost to breathe.

ANNABELLA.

Yet you saw nothing?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Nothing.

ANNABELLA.

And heard only the bursting of the door?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Only that for a time : but afterwards, when I listened intently, I heard strange whisperings near me, and soft steps, as of unshod feet, passing between me and the bed.

ANNABELLA.

Footsteps?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Ay; and the curtains of the bed began to shake as if touched by a hand, or the motion of some passing body. Then I knew that they were dealing with my poor child, and I had no power to break the spell of their witchcraft, for I had no voice to speak.

ANNABELLA.

You had no power to speak?

LADY DUNGARREN.

No; though the Lord's prayer was on my lips, I was unable to utter it.

ANNABELLA.

Heaven preserve us! what a dreadful situation you were in! Did the poor child seem to notice any thing?

LADY DUNGARREN.

I cannot say how she looked when the door burst open; but as soon as I could observe her, her eyes were wide open, gazing fixedly, as if some ugly visage were hanging over her, from which she could not turn away, and presently she fell into a convulsion, and I at that instant recovered my voice and my strength, and called nurse from her closet to assist her.

ANNABELLA.

What did nurse think?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Nurse said she was sure that both Grizeld Bane and Mary Macmurren had been in the room. And this I will take my oath to, that afterwards, when she fell quiet, she muttered in her sleep, in a thick untuneable voice, and amongst the words which she uttered, I distinctly heard the name of Mary Macmurren.

ANNABELLA.

What an awful thing it is if people can have power from the evil spirit to inflict such calamity!

LADY DUNGARREN.

Awful indeed!

ANNABELLA.

How can they purchase such power?

LADY DUNGARREN.

The ruin of a Christian soul is price enough for any thing. Satan, in return for this, will bestow power enough to do whatever his bondswoman or bondsman listeth.

ANNABELLA.

Yet they are always miserable and poor.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Not always; but malignant gratifications are what they delight in, and nothing else is of much value to them.

ANNABELLA.

It may be so: —it is strange and fearful!

LADY DUNGARREN.

I must go to my closet now, and mix the medicine for poor Jessie, to be ready at the proper time; for I expect the minister to pray by her to-night, and would have every thing prepared before he comes. [Exit.

ANNABELLA (*alone, after a thoughtful pause*).

Ay, if there be in reality such supernatural agency, by which a breast fraught with passion and misery may find relief. (*Starting back.*) Dreadful resource! I may not be so assisted. (*After walking to and fro in great perturbation.*) Oh, Dungarren, Dungarren! that a paltry girl, who is not worthy to be my tirewoman, the orphan of a murderer — a man disgraced, who died in a pit and was buried in a moor; one whose very forehead is covered with blushing shame when the eye of an irreproachable gentlewoman looks upon her; whose very voice doth alter and hesitate when a simple question of her staté or her family is put to her, — that a creature thus naturally formed to excite aversion and contempt should so engross thy affections! It makes me mad! — “May not be so assisted!” Evil is but evil, and torment is but torment! — I have felt both — I have felt them to extremity? what have I then to fear? (*Starts on hearing the door open behind her, as PHEMY enters.*) Who is there?

PHEMY.

Only me, madam.

ANNABELLA.

What brings thee here?

PHEMY.

I came to know if you will trust the Glasgow carrier, who is just come for the orders of the family, with your commission to the silk shop.

ANNABELLA.

What art thou telling me?

PHEMY.

Of your commission to the silk shop.

ANNABELLA.

I don't understand thee.

PHEMY.

The additional yards of silk that are wanted.

ANNABELLA.

I want none, fool! Thy wits are bewildered.

PHEMY.

Not *my* wits, Madam. What will you please to have, then, for the trimming of your new mantua?

ANNABELLA.

Newt skins and adder skins, an thou wilt.

PHEMY.

That might do for a witch's gown, indeed: Grizeld Bane might have a garniture of that sort.

ANNABELLA.

What dost thou know of Grizeld Bane?

PHEMY.

Stories enow, if they be true. It is she, or Mary Macmurren, who has, as they say, bewitched the poor young lady here; and it was a spell cast by her, that made the farmer's pretty daughter fall over the crag and break her leg, the week before her wedding.

ANNABELLA.

Before her wedding?

PHEMY.

Yes, truly, Madam; and no wedding at all will ever follow such an untoward mischance.

ANNABELLA.

Who told thee this?

PHEMY.

Everybody tells it, and knows it to be true. — (*After a pause.*) But the carrier is waiting. — She does not heed me. (*Aside.*) What is the matter, Madam? Are you not well?

ANNABELLA (*rousing herself suddenly*).

Dost thou know Grizeld Bane?

PHEMY.

Heaven forbend!

ANNABELLA.

Dost thou know where she lives?

PHEMY.

Somewhere not far distant, I believe: Black Bawldy the herd knows her den well enough.

ANNABELLA.

Is he in the house at present?

PHEMY.

Very likely ; for this is the time when his cows are brought in for the milking.

ANNABELLA.

Go find him, if thou canst, and send him to me immediately. [*Exit PHEMY.*] If there be a spell to break wedlock, and to break affection also, it were well worth its purchase at any price ; yea, though the soul's jeopardy were added to the gold.

Re-enter PHEMY, followed by BAWLDY.

PHEMY.

I had not far to seek for him : he stood waiting in the passage, for the cooling of his brose.

ANNABELLA.

Come nearer, Bawldy. Dost thou know where Grizeld Bane lives?

BAWLDY.

Ay, that I do, to my cost. She and her black cat, too, live owre near my milk kye. Brindle

and Hawky gi' but half the milk they should gi',
and we wat weel whare the ither half gangs to.

ANNABELLA.

Never mind that, my good lad! Hie to her
immediately, and tell her to come to me.

BAWLDY.

To you, Leddy?

ANNABELLA.

Yes: to come to me without loss of time. —
There is money for thee. (*Giving money.*) Do
thy errand speedily and secretly: let nobody
know that I have sent thee.

BAWLDY.

An' she's to come to you here, hidlings, as it
war?

ANNABELLA.

Yes, Bawldy; and when she comes, let her
wait for me in the cattle shed, by the wood, and
I'll meet her there. Dost thou understand me,
man? Go quickly.

BAWLDY.

The night, Leddy?

ANNABELLA.

Yes, to-night. Why dost thou look so scared?

BAWLDY.

I darna gang to her at night. — Gude be wi'
us! an I war to find her at her cantrips, I had

better be belaired in a bog, or play coupcarling
owre the craig o' Dalwhirry.

ANNABELLA.

She must be very terrible to make thee so
afraid.

BAWLDY.

When she begins to mutter wi' her white
wuthered lips, and her twa gleg eyen are glower-
ing like glints o' wildfire frae the hollow o' her
dark bent brows, she's enough to mak a trooper
quake; ay, wi' baith swurd and pistol by his
side. — No, no, Leddy! the sun maun be up in
the lift whan I venture to her den.

ANNABELLA.

Thou wilt get there before it be dark, if thou
make good speed.

BAWLDY.

No, though I had the speed o' a mawkin. It
is gloaming already; black clouds are spreading
fast owre the sky, and far-off thunner is growl-
ing. There is a storm coming on, and the fiends
o' the air are at wark; I darna gang till the
morning.

ANNABELLA.

Timid loon! retire then, and go in the morn-
ing. But see that thou keep the secret. I'll
give thee more money, if thou prove trusty and
diligent.

[*Exit* BAWLDY.]

PHEMY.

The carrier will set off in a trice, Madam.

ANNABELLA.

Let him go.

PHEMY.

And no orders given?

ANNABELLA.

Give him what orders thou wilt, and plague
me no more. *[Exeunt severally.]*

SCENE II.

Before the Gate of DUNGARREN Tower : ANDERSON and other Servants are seen loitering within the Gate.

Enter DUNGARREN, with a fowling-piece in his hand, and a pouch or bag swung from his shoulder, as returned from sport.

ANDERSON (*advancing to meet him*).

I'm right glad to see your honour returned ;
for the night draws on, and it wad hae been nae
joke, I trow, to hae been belated on a haunted
warlock moor, and thunner growling i' the
welkin.

DUNGARREN.

The sky indeed looks threatening.

ANDERSON.

And what sport has your honour had the day?
The birds grow wilder every year, now.

DUNGARREN.

Think you so, Anderson?

ANDERSON.

Trowth do I! There's something uncanny
about them too. It's a fearfu' time we live in.

DUNGARREN.

I have done pretty well, however. Give this
to the housekeeper to increase the stores of her
larder. (*Unfastening the bag, and giving it to*
ANDERSON.)

ANDERSON.

By my faith! she'll be glad enough o' sick a
supply; for Madam Annabell is come back
again, wi' that Episcopal lassie frae the Isle o'
Barra, that reads out o' a prayer book, and ca's
hersell her Leddy's gentlewoman. Lord be
mercifu' to us! the leddy's bad enough, but
Job himsell could hardly thole the gentlewoman.

DUNGARREN.

What has brought her back so soon? She
was to have staid a week in Dumbartonshire.

ANDERSON.

That's more than I can say: but here comes
Black Bawldy, wha was sent for to speak to her;

ay, and gaed into the very parlour till her. He, maybe, kens what has brought her back.

DUNGARREN.

That's strange enough.

ANDERSON.

Nae mair strange than true. Into the very parlour: I saw him set his dirty feet on the clean floor wi' my ain eyen.

Enter BAWLDY.

DUNGARREN.

So, Bawldy, thou'rt become company for ladies in a parlour.

BAWLDY.

Toot, your honour! ony body's gude enough to haver wi' them, when they're wearying.

DUNGARREN.

What makes Mrs. Annabell return to us so soon, if she be wearying?

BAWLDY.

She'll no weary now, when your honour's come hame.

DUNGARREN.

Has any thing happen'd? She was to have staid a week in Dumbartonshire.

BAWLDY.

Maybe she has been a week there, o' her ain

reckoning, tho' we ca' it only twa days. Folks said when she gaed awa', that she wou'd na be lang awa'. It wou'd be as easy to keep a moth frae the can'le, or a cat frae the milk-house, as keep her awa' frae the tower o' Dungarren (*lowering his voice*) when the laird is at hame.

DUNGARREN.

What say'st thou, varlet?

BAWL DY.

Only what I hear folks say, your honour.

DUNGARREN.

Go thy ways to thy loft and thy byre. Folks are saucy, and teach lads to forget themselves. [*Exit BAWLDY.*] (*Pointing to the bag.*) Take it in, Anderson. [*Exit ANDERSON.*]

DUNGARREN (*alone, turning impatiently from the gate*).

I thought to have crossed the threshold of my own house in peace. — To be pestered with the passion of an indelicate vixen! — She fastens her affection upon me like a doctor's blister-sheet, strewed with all the stinging powders of the torrid zone, for daring and desperate medication. (*After pacing to and fro in a disturbed manner.*) And my gentle Violet, too: must she be still subjected to her scornful looks and insulting insinuations? A noble spirit like hers, under

such painful circumstances to be exposed to such insolence! It shall not be: I will not suffer it. (*A thoughtful pause.*) To affront a lady in my own house? Not to be thought of! To leave the country at once, and let the sea and its waves roll between us? Ay, this were well, were not all that is dear to me left behind;—my mother, my poor afflicted sister, my dear, dear Violet, the noble distressed Violet Murrey.—No; I will stay and contend with the termagant, as I would with an evil spirit. Had she the soul of a woman within her, though the plainest and meanest of her sex, I would pity and respect her; but as she is——O! shame upon it! she makes me as bad as herself. I know not what to do: I dare not enter yet.

[*Exit the way by which he came.*]

SCENE III.

A wild Moor, skirted on one side by a thick tangled Wood, through which several open paths are seen. The Stage darkened to represent faint moonlight through heavy gathering clouds. Thunder and lightning.

Enter by the front ELSPY LOW, MARY MACMURREN, *and her son, WILKIN, who stop and listen to the thunder.*

MARY MACMURREN (*spreading her arms exultingly.*)

Ay, ay! this sounds like the true sound o' Princedome and Powerfu'ness.

ELSPY LOW (*clapping her hands as another louder peal rolls on.*)

Ay; it sounds royally! we shall na mare be deceived; it wull prove a' true at last.

MARY MACMURREN.

This very night we shall ken what we shall ken. We shall be wi' the Beings of power—be wi' them and be of them.

(*Thunder again.*)

ELSPY LOW.

It is an awfu' din, and tells wi' a lordly voice
wha is coming and at hand : we shall na mare
be deceived.

MARY MACMURREN (*to WILKIN, as he presses
closer to her side*).

Dinna tug at me sa wickedly, Wilkin ; thou
shalt ha' a bellyfu' soon o' the fat o' the lawn,
my poor glutton.

WILKIN.

Fou ! fou ! meat ! great meat ! — hurr, hurr !
(*making a noise in his throat to express pleasure*)
it's a-coming !

MARY MACMURREN.

We shall ha' what we list at last, — milk and
meat ! meat and malt !

ELSPY LOW.

Mingling and merry-making ; and revenge
for the best sport of a' !

MARY MACMURREN.

Ay ; the hated anes will pay the cost, I trow.
We'll sit at our good coags of cream, and think
o' the growling carle's kye wi' their udders lank
and sapless, and the goodwife greeting ow'r her
kirk.

ELSPY LOW.

Ha, ha, ha ! there's good spice in that, woman,
to relish far poorer fare.

MARY MACMURREN.

They refused us a han'fu' in our greatest need,
but now it wull be our turn to ha' fou sacks and
baith cakes and kebbucks at command, while
their aumery is bare.

ELSPY LOW.

Ha, ha, ha ! there's good spice in that, kimmer.
(*A very loud peal, &c.*)

MARY MACMURREN.

Hear ye that ! the thunner grows louder and
louder ; and here she comes wi' her arms in the
air and her spirit as hie as the clouds. Her
murky chief and his murky mates wull soon
fra a' quarters o' the warld, I warrant ye, come
trooping to their tryste.

*Enter GRIZELD BANE from the wood by the
bottom of the Stage, advancing with wild frantic
gestures.*

GRIZELD BANE (*stopping on the middle of the
stage, and spreading wide her raised arms with
lofty courtesy*).

Come, come, my mighty master !

Come on the clouds ; come on the wind !

Come for to loosen, and come for to bind !

Rise from the raging sea ; rise from the mine !

There's power in the night storm for thee and for thine.

MARY MACMURREN (*very eagerly to GRIZELD*).

Dost thou really see him?

ELSPY LOW (*in the same manner*).

Dost thou see him? or hear him?

MARY MACMURREN.

Is he near us?

ELSPY LOW.

Is he on the moor?

GRIZELD BANE.

Hold your peace, wretches! he may start up by your side in an instant, and scare the very life from your body, if ye forget what I told you.

ELSPY LOW.

I have na' forgotten it.

MARY MACMURREN.

Nor I neither. We're to tak' han's first of a'. (*Takes ELSPY by the hand, and then turns to WILKIN.*) And thine, too, Wilkin.

WILKIN.

Meat, meat!

MARY MACMURREN.

No, glutton; thou mun gi' me thy haun and go round, as I told thee.

WILKIN.

Round! round! pots be round, dishes be round; a' fou for Wilkin! hurr, hurr!

[GRIZELD BANE *joins them, and they all take hands, moving in a circular direction, and speaking all together in a dull chanting measure.*]

To the right, to the right, to the right we wheel;
Thou heaving earth, free passage give, and our dark Prince
 reveal.

To the right, &c. (*three times, then turning the contrary way.*)

To the left, to the left, to the left we go;
Ye folding clouds, your curtain rend, and our great Master
 show.

(*Loud thunder.*)

ELSPY LOW (*after a pause*).

Is he coming yet?

MARY MACMURREN.

Is he coming, Grizeld Bane? I see nothing.

GRIZELD BANE (*seizing her by the throat*).

Hold thy peace, or I'll strangle thee! Is it
for a wretch like thee to utter earthly words on
the very verge of such an awful presence?

MARY MACMURREN.

For God's sake! —for Satan's sake! —for ony
sake, let gang thy terrible grip.

(*A tremendous loud peal.*)

GRIZELD BANE (*exultingly*).

There's an astounding din to make your ears tingle! as if the welkin were breaking down upon us with its lading of terror and destruction! The lightning has done as I bade it. I see him, I see him now.

MARY MACMURREN.

Where, where? I see nothing.

ELSPY LOW.

Nor I either, Grizeld.

GRIZELD BANE.

Look yonder to the skirt of that cloud: his head is bending over it like a knight from the keep of a castle. Hold ye quiet for a space; quiet as the corse in its coffin: he will be on the moor in a trice.

ELSPY LOW.

Trowth, I think he will; for I'm trembling sa.

MARY MACMURREN.

I'm trem'ling too, woman; and sa is poor Wilkin.

GRIZELD BANE (*exultingly, after another very loud peal, &c.*).

Ay, roar away! glare away! roar to the very outrage of roaring! Brave heralding, I trow, for the prince of the power of the air!—He will be here, anon.

MARY MACMURREN.

I'm sure he will, for my legs bend under me
sa, I canna' stand upright.

GRIZELD BANE.

Hold thy tongue! he is on the moor. Look
yonder, where he is moving with strides like the
steps of a man, and light by his side. Dost thou
see it? (*To MARY MACMURREN.*)

MARY MACMURREN.

Preserve us from skathe! I see like a man
wi' a lantern. Dost thou see it, Elspy?

ELSPY LOWE.

Distinctly: and wi' what fearfu' strides he
comes on!

GRIZELD BANE.

It is him; he approaches. Bow your heads
instantly to the earth, and repeat the Lord's
Prayer backwards, if you can.

*[They all bow their bodies and begin an in-
articulate muttering; and presently enters
MURREY, bearing a lantern, which he
hastily darkens upon discovering them,
and tries to avoid them.]*

GRIZELD BANE.

Do not pass from us! stay with us; speak to
us, Satan! Our spells are shrewd and sure, and

thou knowest we have served and will serve thee. Turn not away! Give us power and we'll worship thee. Art thou not come to our tryste?

MURREY.

Miserable women! what brings you here at this hour in this place? With whom have you made a tryste?

GRIZELD BANE.

With thyself, mighty Satan! for we know thee well enough for all the skreen of darkness that encircles thee.

MURREY (*in a deep, strong, feigned voice*).
What is your will with me?

GRIZELD BANE.

Give us power, and we'll worship thee.

MURREY

What power do you covet? Power over goods and chattels, or power over bodies and spirits? Say which, by your compact, you would purchase?

GRIZELD BANE (*eagerly*).

Both, both!

MURREY.

Ye ask too much; take your choice of the one or the other.

MARY MACMURREN.

What say'st thou, Elspy?

ELSPY LOW.

I'll consider first.

MARY MACMURREN.

Goods and chattels for my compact.

GRIZELD BANE (*to her disdainfully*).

Sordid caitiff! Bodies and spirits for mine!

MURREY.

I will see to that at convenient season.

GRIZELD BANE, MARY MACMURREN, *and* ELSPY
LOW (*speaking at once*).

Now, now!

GRIZELD BANE.

Let us have it now, mighty master, and we'll
swear to the compact on this spot.

MURREY.

Have ye considered it? Ye shall have your
will on earth for a term, and then ye must serve
my will in the pit of fire and brimstone for ever.

GRIZELD BANE.

Be it so! and make this very night the be-
ginning of our power.

MURREY.

Ye are rare mates, indeed, to be so eagerly set
upon evil.

GRIZELD BANE.

Are we not, master? Swear us forthwith, and remove that dull darkness from thy presence. Call round thy liege imps and begin. Ay, ay; they are all coming.

MARY MACMURREN.

Where, where, Grizeld?

GRIZELD BANE.

A score of grinning faces to the right and the left. Dost thou not see them, blind mole that thou art? But where is he who was wont to attend thee, great chieftain? Thou hast never a liege man like him.

MURREY.

Whom dost thou mean, haggard dame?

GRIZELD BANE.

He with the wreath round his throat; the fellest and bravest of them all.

MURREY.

He shall be with me when I meet you again.

GRIZELD BANE.

Do not leave us now, princely master! do not deceive us again: bind us and give us power ere we part.

MURREY.

Go to the further side of the wood, and I'll follow you: I may not bind you here, for I hear

the sound of horses approaching. Begone ; mortal man must not disturb our rites.

[As the women are about to go off, RUTHERFORD, as if just dismounted, holding his horse by the bridle, appears from behind a rocky hillock which forms one of the side scenes, near the front, whilst the lightning, coming in a broad flash across the Stage, shows every thing upon it distinctly for a moment. A loud peal follows : RUTHERFORD and his horse draw back and disappear ; and exeunt by the opposite side GRIZELD BANE, &c., leaving MURREY alone.]

And so there be verily such wretched creatures in the world, who are, or desire to be, in league with the wicked one ! It is a fearful and mortifying glimpse of human nature. I hope they have not scared my poor child upon her way ; or rather, that this awful storm has prevented her from coming abroad. O, would I had not requested her to meet me ! for I know her brave spirit and the strength of her affection ; neither storm nor danger will deter her. Why did I tempt her ? Alas, my gentle child ! is this the love of a parent ? Here she is !

Enter VIOLET from the same side by which RUTHERFORD disappeared, and he runs to her and locks her in his arms, both remaining silent for a time.

VIOLET.

My father! my dear, dear father!

MURREY.

My own sweet Violet! all that I can call my own, and worth all that I have lost. But for thee, my dear child, I should in truth be, what I am now, by all but thyself, believed to be, — no longer a being of this world.

VIOLET.

Say not so, my dear father! are there not kindness and humanity every where, whether you receive it under one name or another? And if this be not the case, take me with you, and you shall be no longer friendless and bereft.

MURREY.

No, Violet; that I will never do. To see thee by stealth, were it but a few times in the course of years, with sad dreary intervals between, is still worth living for; and more than a man, stained with the blood of a fellow creature, deserves.

VIOLET.

Ah, why will you tax yourself so harshly! The quarrel was fastened on you.

MURREY.

Fool that I was, to let the angry reproaches of a fool get such mastery over me ! were reason and prowess bestowed upon me for such a despicable use ? Oh ! had Fatheringham, who stood by, and was the only witness of the combat, endeavoured, as he might have done, to reconcile us, that blood had never been shed.

VIOLET.

But what is past is past ; let us think of the lot which is our portion now—of that which lies before us. I will love you always, and think of you always, and be with you always, if you will permit me. The rank and the fare and the home that are good enough for you are good enough for me. And if Fatheringham be still in life, he may again appear to clear you from this crime. In the mean time, your supposed death and your supposed body being found and buried by your friends, give you in any distant retreat a complete security. Let me then, my dear father, go with you now, or follow you soon.

MURREY.

Is there not one to be left behind who is dear to you ?

VIOLET.

No one who is or ought to be so dear as you. And I shrink from the thought of being received into a family who will despise me.

MURREY.

Violet, thou art too proud : thou hast got my infirmity by inheritance. Yes, I was proud once : but, dead in men's belief, and separated from the social world, I am now, as it were, a dead man in my own feelings. I look on the things of this earth as though I belonged not to it. I am meek and chastened now, and will not encourage thee in the cherishing of imprudent unreasonable pride. But we will talk of this elsewhere : I hear voices from the wood.

[Wild cries from the women heard at a distance, and then nearer.]

I fear they will return when they find I do not join them.

VIOLET.

Whom do you mean ?

MURREY.

Didst thou meet nobody on the way ?

VIOLET.

Nobody but our good minister and his man, going, as I suppose, to the Tower of Dungarren, to pray by the sick child.

MURREY.

I hope he did not see you.

VIOLET.

I hope he did not : for I tried to conceal my-

self behind a bush ; and he and the servant passed me in silence.

[Wild cries without, nearer than before.]

MURREY.

Let us leave this spot : those creatures are returning to it. I will tell thee about them when we are in safety. *[Exeunt in haste.]*

SCENE IV.

A narrow Passage Hall or Lobby.

Enter PHEMY, meeting ANDERSON, who carries a light in his hand.

ANDERSON.

We may a' gang to our beds now, that are nae appointed to sit up.

PHEMY.

What a terrible storm we have had ! The brazen sconces in the hall, with the guns, pistols, pikes, and claymores, made such a clattering, as if they were coming down upon our heads altogether, with the slates and rafters of the old roof on the top of all. I'm certain a thunderbolt struck somewhere or other on this unlucky house : I wish I were out of it.

ANDERSON.

It's a pity ye dinna get your wish, then. I'm sure there's naebody rightfully belonging to this family that has ony mind to baulk it.

PHEMY.

Don't be so hasty, Mr. Anderson: I had no intention to disparage the house of Dungarren, though there be neither silk nor tapestry on its walls, like the houses that I have lived in.

ANDERSON.

Weel, weel! be it sae! Silk and tapestry may be plentier than manners in the rich island of Barra.

PHEMY.

I have lived in other places than Barra, I assure you.

ANDERSON.

I dinna doubt ye hae; but let us us mak nae mair quarrelling about it now, whan we shou'd a' be thankfu' that we war sheltered frae sic a storm in ony house.—Grizeld Bane and her mates war on the moor the night, I'll tak my aith on't. God help ony poor wanderer wha may hae been belated near their haunts! I wadna hae been in his skin for the best har'st fee that ever was paid into a Lowlander's purse or a Highlander's spleuchan.

PHEMY.

Was not the minister expected ?

ANDERSON.

O! *he*, belike, might cross the moor unscathed. It wad be a bauld witch or warlock either, that wad meddle wi' the minister. And that is the reason, I reckon, why he winna believe there is ony sic thing in a' the country about.

Enter BAWLDY.

PHEMY.

Here comes Bawldy. What keeps thee up, man ?

BAWLDY.

I'm waiting for the minister.

ANDERSON.

Wha bade thee wait ? What is Duncan about ?

BAWLDY.

He's about a Highlandman's business, just doing naething at a' ; and wad be snoring on the settle in the turning o' a bannock, if fear wad let him sleep.

PHEMY.

Is he more afraid than the rest of you ?

BAWLDY.

He has mair cause, mistress : he has seen

bogles enow in his time, and kens a' the gaits and fashions o' them.

PHEMY.

Has he indeed.

BAWLDY.

Ay, certes ; by his ain tale, at least. We hae heard o' mawkins starting up in the shapes of auld women, whan chased to a cross running burn, but Duncan has seen it. Nae wonner if he be feared !

ANDERSON.

Weel, than, an thou will sit up, he'll tell thee stories to keep thee frae wearying ; and I dinna care if I join ye mysell for an hour or sae, for I'm naewise disposed for my ain bed in that dark turret-chaumer.

BAWLDY.

But gin ye keep company wi' stable loons and herds, Mr. Anderson, ye'll gi' them, nae doubt, a wee smack o' your ain higher calling. Is the key o' the cellar in your pouch ? My tongue's unco dry after a' this fright.

ANDERSON.

Awa', ye pawky thief ! Dost tu think that I'll herrie the laird's cellar for thee or ony body ? — But there's the whisky bottle in my ain cupboard, wi' some driblets in it yet, that ye may tak ; and deil a drap mair shall ye get, an

thy tongue were as guizened as a spelding. I wonder wha learnt sic a youngster as thee to be sae pawky.

PHEMY.

Bawldy has by nature cunning enough to lose nothing for want of asking; and Mr. Anderson, too, has his own natural faculty for keeping what he has got. — Good night to you both.

ANDERSON.

Good night to ye. (*Half aside.*) I'm sure I wad rather bid you good night than good morrow, at any time. [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE V.

A large Chamber, with a Bed at the bottom of the Stage, on which is discovered a sick Child, and LADY DUNGARREN seated by it.

Enter DUNGARREN by the front, stepping very softly.

DUNGARREN.

Is she asleep?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Yes; she has been asleep for some minutes.

DUNGARREN.

Let me watch by her then, and go you to rest.

LADY DUNGARREN.

I dare not : her fits may return.

DUNGARREN.

The medicine you have given her will, I trust, prevent it : so do go to rest, my dear mother !

LADY DUNGARREN.

No, dear Robert ; her disease is one over which no natural medicine has any power. As sure as there are witches and warlocks on earth — and we know there are — they have been dealing with her this night.

DUNGARREN.

Be not too sure of this. The noise of the storm, and the flashes of lightning, might alarm her, and bring on convulsions.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Ah, foolish youth ! thou art proud of the heathenish learning thou hast gleaned up at college, and wilt not believe what is written in Scripture.

DUNGARREN.

Nay, mother, say only that I do not believe —

[*Enter ANNABELLA behind them, and stops to listen.*]

—such explanations of Scripture as have given countenance to superstitious alarm. Our good pastor himself attaches a different meaning to those passages you allude to, and has but little faith in either witches or apparitions.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Yes, he has been at college, good man as he is. Who else would doubt of it?

DUNGARREN.

But Violet Murrey has not been at college, and she has as little faith in them as Mr. Rutherford.

ANNABELLA (*advancing passionately*).

If Violet Murrey's faith, or pretended faith, be the rule we are to go by, the devil and his bondsfolk will have a fine time of it in this unhappy county of Renfrew. She will take especial care to speak no words for the detection of mischief which she profits by.

DUNGARREN.

Profits by ! What means that foul insinuation?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Be not so violent, either of you. Soften that

angry eye, Robert; and remember you are speaking to a lady.

DUNGARREN.

And let her remember that she is speaking *of* a lady.

ANNABELLA.

What rank the daughter of a condemned malefactor holds in the country, better heralds than I must determine.

DUNGARREN.

Malignant and heartless reproach! Provoke me not beyond measure, Annabella. For this good woman's sake, for thy own sake, for the sake of female dignity and decorum, provoke me no more with words so harsh, so unjust, so unseemly.

ANNABELLA.

Not so unseemly, Dungarren, as degrading the heir of an honourable house, with an attachment so —— But I will say no more.

DUNGARREN.

You have said too much already.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Hush, hush! for Heaven's sake be peaceable! You have wakened the child from her sleep. Look how she gazes about. Nurse! nurse! ho!
(*Calling loud off the Stage.*)

Enter Nurse.

NURSE.

Are they tormenting her again? They hae time now, when their storm and their revelry is past, to cast their cantrips here, I trow. (*Shaking her fist angrily.*) O you ugly witch! show your elrich face from behint the hangings there, an' I'll score you aboon the breath wi' a jock-teleg.

LADY DUNGARREN (*to Nurse*).

Dost thou see any thing?

NURSE.

I thought I just saw a waft o' her haggart visage in the dark shadow o' the bed hangings yonder. But see or no see, she is in this room, as sure as I am a Christian saul. What else shou'd mak the bairn stare sae, and wriggle wi' her body sae miserably?

DUNGARREN.

But are not you a bold woman, Nurse, to threaten a witch so bloodily?

NURSE.

I'm bauld enough to tak vengeance at my ain haun upon ony body that torments my bairn, though it war Satan himsel. Howsomever, I carry about a leaf o' the Bible sewed to my pouch, now; for things hae come to sic a fearfu'

pitch, that crooked pins and rowan-tree do next to nae good at a'.—Bless us a'! I wush the minister war come.

DUNGARREN.

And you have your wish, Nurse; for here he is.

Enter RUTHERFORD, in a hurried, bewildered manner.

LADY DUNGARREN.

My good Sir, you are welcome : but my heart reproaches me for having brought you from home in such a dreadful night.—What is the matter with you?

DUNGARREN.

He cannot speak.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Sit down in this chair, my good Sir. He is going to faint.

[DUNGARREN supports him, and places him in an easy chair; then fetches him a glass of water, which he swallows hastily.]

DUNGARREN.

Has the lightning touched you, dear Sir?

RUTHERFORD.

Not the lightning.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Has aught happened to you on the moor?

ANNABELLA.

Have you seen any thing?—He has seen something.

DUNGARREN.

Have you seen any thing, my good Sir?

RUTHERFORD.

Nought, by God's grace, that had any power to hurt me.

DUNGARREN.

But you have seen something which has overcome your mind to an extraordinary degree. Were another man in your case, I should say that superstitious fears had o'ermaster'd him, and played tricks with his imagination.

RUTHERFORD.

What is natural or unnatural, real or imaginary, who shall determine? But I have seen that, which, if I saw it not, the unassisted eyesight can give testimony to nothing.

LADY DUNGARREN *and* ANNABELLA [*both speaking together*].

What was it? What was it?

[RUTHERFORD *gives no answer*].

DUNGARREN.

You saw, then, what has moved you so much, distinctly and vividly ?

RUTHERFORD.

Yea, his figure and the features of his face, as distinctly, in the bright glare of the lightning, as your own now appear at this moment.

DUNGARREN.

A man whom you knew, and expected not to find at such an hour and in such a place. But what of this ? Might not such a thing naturally happen ?

RUTHERFORD (*lowering his voice, and drawing DUNGARREN aside, while ANNABELLA draws closer to him to listen*).

No, Robert Kennedy : he whose form and face I distinctly saw, has been an indweller of the grave these two years.

DUNGARREN (*in a low voice also*).

Indeed ! Are you sure of it ?

RUTHERFORD.

I put his body into the coffin with mine own hands, and helped to carry it to the grave ; yet there it stood before me, in the bright blazing of the storm, and seemed to look upon me, too, with a look of recognition most strange and horrible.

ANNABELLA (*eagerly*).

Whose ghost was it? Who was the dead man you saw?

RUTHERFORD (*rising from his chair, and stepping back from her with displeasure*).

I reckoned, Madam, but upon one listener.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Nay, be not angry with her. Who can well refrain from listening to such a tale? And be not angry with me neither, when I ask you one question, which it so much concerns me to know. Saw you aught besides this apparition? any witches or creatures of evil?

RUTHERFORD.

I will answer that question, Lady, at another time, and in greater privacy.

ANNABELLA (*to* LADY DUNGARREN).

He has seen them; it is evident he has. But some of his friends might be amongst them: there may be good cause for secrecy and caution.

DUNGARREN (*to* ANNABELLA).

Why do you press so unsparingly upon a man whose spirits have, from some cause or other, received such a shock?

RUTHERFORD.

I forgive her, Dungarren: say no more about it. It is God's goodness to me that I am here

unhurt, again to do the duty of a Christian pastor to my dear and friendly flock now convened. Let me pray by the bed of that poor suffering child, for her, for myself, and for all here present.

LADY DUNGARREN (*to ANNABELLA*).

Let us put her in a different position before he begin : she must be tired of that ; for see, she moves again uneasily.

[*LADY DUNGARREN takes ANNABELLA to the bottom of the Stage, and they both seem employed about the child, while DUNGARREN and RUTHERFORD remain on the front.*]

DUNGARREN.

It is a most extraordinary and appalling apparition you have seen. What do you think of it ?

RUTHERFORD.

What can I think of it, but that the dead are sometimes permitted to revisit the earth, and that I verily have seen it.

DUNGARREN.

I would more readily believe this than give credit to the senseless power and malevolence of witchcraft, which you have always held in derision.

RUTHERFORD.

It is presumption to hold any thing in derision.

DUNGARREN.

Ha ! say you so, in this altered tone of voice ! Have you met with any thing to-night to change your opinions on this subject ? Have you seen any of the old women, so strangely spoken of, on the moor ?

RUTHERFORD.

Would that I had only seen such !

DUNGARREN.

The voice in which you speak, the expression with which you look upon me, makes me tremble. Am I concerned with aught that you have seen ?

RUTHERFORD.

You are, my dear Robert, and must think no more of Violet Murrey. (*A deep silence.*) Yes ; it has stricken you to the heart. Think upon it as you ought. I expect no answer.

DUNGARREN (*endeavouring to recover speech*).

But I must —— I will try —— I must answer you, for I —— (*tearing open his waistcoat, and panting for breath,*) —— I can believe nothing that accuses her.

RUTHERFORD.

Were a daughter of my own concerned, I could not be more distressed.

DUNGARREN.

It makes me distracted to hear thee say so !

RUTHERFORD.

Go to thine own room, and endeavour to compose thy mind, and I will pray for thee here. Pray for thyself, too, in private : pray earnestly, for there is, I fear, a dreadful warfare of passion abiding thee.

[*Exit DUNGARREN by the front, while RUTHERFORD joins the ladies by the sick-bed, where they prepare to kneel as the Scene closes.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *The inside of a miserable Cottage, with a Board or coarse Table by the wall, on which stand some empty wooden Bickers or Bowls.*

Enter WILKIN, who runs eagerly to the board, then turns away disappointed.

WILKIN.

Na, na ! tuim yet ! a' tuim yet ! Milk nane !

parritch nane! (*Pointing to the bowls, and then pressing his stomach.*) Tuim there! tuim here! Woe worth it! to say they wad be fou, an' they're no fou! Woe worth it! woe worth them a'!

Enter BAWLDY, and WILKIN runs to take hold of him.

BAWLDY (*frightened*).

Han's aff, I tell thee!

WILKIN.

Hast brought ony thing? Gie me't, gie me't.

BAWLDY (*pulling out a horse-shoe from his pocket*).

Stan' aff, I say! Nane o' your witch nips for me! I hae, maybe, brought what thou winna like, an tu hae wit enough to ken what it is.

WILKIN.

Will 't kill me?

BAWLDY.

Ay; fule as he is, he's frightened for't;—the true mark of warlockry. They hae linket him in wi' the rest: naething's owre waff for Satan, an it hae a saul o' ony kind to be tint.

WILKIN.

Will 't kill me?

BAWLDY.

No : but I'll score thy imp's brow wi't, — that's what I'll do, — an tu lay a finger on me. But dinna glow'r sae : stan' aff a bit, an answer my quastions, and there's siller for thee. (*Throwing him some pence.*) Was tu on the moor i' the night-time, wi' thy mither ?

WILKIN.

Mither ?

BAWLDY.

Ay ; was tu on the moor wi' her, whan the thunner roared ?

WILKIN.

Thunner roared, fire roared, thunner roared ! hurl ! hurl ! hurl ! (*Imitating the noise of thunder.*)

BAWLDY.

Ay ; an' ye ware there ?

WILKIN.

Ay, there. (*Nodding his head.*)

BAWLDY.

An' wha was there beside ?

WILKIN.

Beside ?

BAWLDY.

Beside thee an' thy mither. What saw ye there ?

WILKIN.

Black man an' fire : hurl ! hurl ! (*Making a noise as before.*)

BAWL DY.

Gudesaf' us ! has tu seen the deil then, bodily ?

WILKIN.

Deil, deil !

BAWL DY (*shrinking back from him*).

Keep me frae scathe ! That I should stan' sae near ane that has been wi' Satan himsel ! What did tu see forbye ?

WILKIN.

Saw ? Saw folk.

BAWL DY.

What folk ? Auld women ?

WILKIN.

Auld women ; young women. Saw them a' on fire. Hurl ! hurl ! hurl !

BAWL DY.

Saw a young woman ? Was it Maggy Kirk's crooket daughter ?

WILKIN.

Na, joe ! young woman.

BAWL DY.

What's her name ? What did they ca' her ?

WILKIN.

Leddy — young ledgy, on fire.

BAWLBY.

Gude saf' us a'! can this be true!

[*Voices without.*]

FIRST VOICE.

I'll tak amends o' her for cheating us again.

SECOND VOICE.

An' sae will I, spitefu' carlin! Maun nae-body hae power but hersel?

Enter MARY MACMURREN and ELSPY LOW, and BAWLDY hides himself behind the door.

MARY MACMURREN.

There's power to be had, that's certain: power that can raise the storm and the fiend; ay, that can do ony thing. But we're aye to be puir yet: neither meat nor money, after a's dune!

ELSPY LOW.

Neither vengeance nor glawmery, for a' the wicket thoughts we hae thought, for a' the fearfu' words we hae spoken, for a' the backward prayers we hae prayed! — I'll rive her eyen out o' her head, though they shou'd glare upon us frae their hollow sconces, like corpse-can'les frae a grave-stane.

MARY MACMURREN (*pointing to the board*).

Even thay puir cogs are as toom as before, and my puir idiot as hungry. Hast tu had ony thing, Wilkin? (*Turns round to him and discovers BAWLDY.*) Ha! wha has tu wi' thee? (*To BAWLDY.*) What brought thee here, in a mischief to thee! Thou's Dungarren's herd, I reckon.

BAWLDY.

I came frae the tower of Dungarren wi' an errand, I wou'd hae ye to wit.

MARY MACMURREN.

Tell thy errand, then, and no lurk that gate, in a nook, like a thoumart in a dowcot: for if tu be come here without an errand, thou shalt rue it dearly to the last hour o' thy life.

BAWLDY.

Isna this Grizeld Bane's house?

MARY MACMURREN.

No, silly loon! it's my house. She's but a rinagate rawny, frae far awa' parts, that came to be my lodger. Ay; and she may gang as she came, for me: I'll no harbour her ony mair. Nae mair Grizeld Banes in my house, to reeve an' to herrie me sae! She maun pack aff wi' herself this very day.

Enter GRIZELD BANE.

GRIZELD BANE (*looking on her with stern contempt*).

Who speaks of Grizeld Bane with such unwary words? Repeat them, I pray thee. (MARY *stands abashed*.) Thou wilt not. — (To ELSPY, *in like manner*.) And what hast thou to say of Grizeld Bane? (*A pause*.) And thou, too, art silent before my face.

ELSPY LOW.

There's a callant frae Dungarren, i' the nook, that comes on an errand to thee.

GRIZELD BANE (*to BAWLDY*).

Do not tremble so, silly child! What is thine errand?

BAWLDY.

She bade me ——she bade me say ——ye maun come to her.

GRIZELD BANE.

To whom, and where? Thou speakest as if my hand were already on thy throat, where it shall very soon be, if thou tell not thy errand more distinctly.

BAWLDY.

The stranger leddy at the tower, the Liddy

Annabell, desires that ye wad meet her in the lone shed, near the outer gate, in the afternoon. Gi' me an answer, an please ye.

GRIZELD BANE (*in a kind of chant*).

Where there be ladies and where there be lords,
Mischief is making with glances and words,
Work is preparing for pistols and swords.

BAWL DY.

Is that an answer?

GRIZELD BANE.

She may take it for one; but if it please thee better, thou may'st say to her, I will do as she desires. And take this token with thee, youngster. (*Going close to him.*)

BAWL DY.

Na, na, I thank ye; I have answer enough.
[*Exit in a fright.*]

GRIZELD BANE (*turning to MARY MACMURREN and ELSPY LOW*).

And ye are dissatisfied, forsooth! you must have power *as* you will and *when* you will.

ELSPY LOW.

Thou hast deceived us.

GRIZELD BANE.

Was there not storm enough to please ye?

ELSPY LOW.

Enough to crack the welkin ; but what got we by it ?

GRIZELD BANE.

Did he come in the storm ? Did you not see him and hear him ?

MARY MACMURREN.

Certes did he ; but what gat we by it ? He keepit na' his tryste wi' us the second time ; an' we gaed wearily hame on our feet, as wat and as puir as we came.

GRIZELD BANE.

O that false tongue ! ye rode upon clouds : I saw you pass over my head, and I called to you.

MARY MACMURREN.

The woman is a fiend or bereft a' thegeather ! I walket hame on my feet, en' gaed to my miserable bed, just as at ony ither time, an' sa did she.

GRIZELD BANE.

But rode ye not afterwards, my chucks ? I saw you both pass over my head, and I called to you.

ELSPY LOW.

If we ware upon clouds, we ware sleeping a' the while, for I ken naething anent it. Do ye, neighbour ? (*To MARY MACMURREN.*)

MARY MACMURREN.

I dare na' just say as ye say, kimmer, for I dreamt I was flying in the air and somebody behint me.

GRIZELD BANE.

Ay, ay, ay ; ye will discern mist and mysteries at last. But ye must have power, forsooth ! *as ye list and when ye list.* If he did not keep tryste in the night, let us cast a spell for him in the day. When doors and windows are darkened, mid-day is as potent as midnight. Shut out the light and begin. But if he roar and rage at you when he does come, that is no fault of mine.
(*Draws a circle on the floor.*)

MARY MACMURREN *and* ELSPY LOW (*at once*).

Na, na ! dinna bring him up now.

[*Exeunt hastily, leaving GRIZELD alone.*]

GRIZELD BANE (*chanting to herself after having completed the circle*).

Black of mien and stern of brow,
Dark one, dread one, hear me now !
Come with potency and speed ;
Come to help me in my need.
Kith and kindred have I none,
Ever wand'ring, ever lone.
Black of mien and stern of brow,
Dark one, dread one, hear me now !

He is now at hand ; the floor yawns under my feet, and the walls are running round ; he is

here! (*bending her head very low and then raising it.*) Ha! is it thou? art thou risen in thy master's stead? It becomes thee to answer my call; it is no weak tie that has bound us together. I loved thee in sin and in blood: when the noose of death wrung thee, I loved thee. And now thou art a dear one and a terrible with the Prince of the power of the air. Grant what I ask! grant it quickly. Give me of thy power; I have earned it. But this is a mean, narrow den; the cave of the lin is near, where water is soughing and fern is waving; the bat-bird clutching o'er head, and the lithe snake stirring below; to the cave, to the cave! we'll hold our council there.

[Exit with frantic gestures, as if courteously showing the way to some great personage.]

SCENE II.

A Flower Garden by the cottage of VIOLET MURREY, with the building partly occupying the bottom of the Stage, and partly concealed.

Enter DUNGARREN, who stops and looks round him, then mutters to himself in a low voice, then speaks audibly.

DUNGARREN.

The lily, and the rose, and the gillyflower;

things the most beautiful in nature, planted and cherished by a hand as fair and as delicate as themselves! Innocence and purity should live here; ay, and do live here: shall the ambiguous whisper of a frightened night-scared man, be his understanding and learning what they may, shake my confidence in this? It was foolish to come on such an errand. (*Turns back, and is about to retire by the way he entered, then seems irresolute, and then stops short.*) Yet being here, I had better have some parley with her: I may learn incidentally from her own lips, what will explain the whole seeming mystery. (*Looking again on the flowers as he proceeds towards the house.*) Pretty pansy! thou hast been well tended since I brought thee from the south country with thy pretty friend, the carnation by thy side. Ay, and ye are companions still; thou, too, hast been well cared for, and all thy swelling buds will open to the sun ere long.

Enter VIOLET from the house, while he is stooping over the flowers.

VIOLET.

You are come to look after your old friends, Dungarren?

DUNGARREN.

I have friends here worth looking after, if

beauty and sweetness give value. Thou art an excellent gardener, Violet; things thrive with thee wonderfully, even as if they were conscious whose flowers they are, and were proud of it.

VIOLET.

Ah ! that were no cause for pride. Methinks, if they were conscious whose flowers they are, they would droop their heads and wither away.

DUNGARREN.

Say not so : thou art melancholy ; the storm has affected thy spirits. Those who were abroad in it say that the lightning was tremendous.

VIOLET.

It was tremendous.

DUNGARREN.

And the rolling of the thunder was awful.

VIOLET.

It was awful.

DUNGARREN.

And the moor was at times one blaze of fiery light, like returning bursts of mid-day, giving every thing to view for an instant in the depth of midnight darkness. (*A pause.*) One who was there told me so. (*Another pause, and she seems uneasy.*) And more than that, a strange unlikely story. (*A still longer pause, and she more uneasy.*) But thou hast no desire to hear

it : even natural curiosity has forsaken thee.
What is the matter ?

VIOLET.

Nothing is the matter : tell me whatever you please, and I will listen to it. Were witches on the moor ?

DUNGARREN.

Yes, witches were there, but that is not my story. There was a form seen on the moor most unlike any thing that could be evil. Thou art pale and disturbed ; hast thou a guess of my meaning ?

VIOLET.

The moor is wide, and benighted wanderers might be upon it of different forms and degrees.

DUNGARREN.

But none who could look like one, whom, nevertheless, 'tis said, it did resemble.

VIOLET (*endeavouring to recover herself*).

Nay, nay, Dungarren ! do not amuse yourself with me : if the devil has power to assume what form he pleases, that will account for your story at once. If he has not, you have only to suppose that some silly girl, with her plaid over her head, was bewildered by the storm at her trysting place, and that will explain it sufficiently.

DUNGARREN.

These are light words, methinks, to follow upon melancholy gravity so suddenly.

VIOLET.

If my words displease you, Dungarren, there is more cause for sorrow than surprise, and the sooner I cease to offend the better.

DUNGARREN.

Violet Murrey of Torewood!!!

VIOLET.

Robert Kennedy of Dungarren!!!

DUNGARREN.

What am I to think?

VIOLET.

Thoughts are free : take your range. Thinking is better than speaking for both of us ; and so, if you please, we shall wish each other good morning. (*Turning from him with a hurried step towards the house.*)

DUNGARREN (*following her*).

We must not so part, my Violet. Had any woman but thyself used me thus, — but what of that ! I love thee and must bear with thee.

VIOLET.

No, Robert Kennedy ; thou lovest me not : for there is suspicion harboured in thy mind which love would have spurned away.

DUNGARREN.

Say not *harboured*. O no! Spurned and rejected, yet, like a trodden adder, turning and rearing again. I ask to know nothing that thou seekest to conceal. Say only that thou wert in thy own home during the night, as I am sure thou wert, and I will be satisfied, though all the diabolical witnesses of Renfrewshire were set in array against thee.

VIOLET.

Must I be forced to bear witness in my own behalf? There is one who should bear witness for me, and lacking that evidence, I scorn every other.

DUNGARREN.

And where is that witness to be found?

VIOLET.

In the heart of Dungarren.

DUNGARREN.

Thou wring'st it to the quick! I am proud and impetuous, but have I deserved this haughty reserve? Dost thou part with me in anger?

VIOLET.

I am angry, and must leave thee; but perhaps I am wrong in being so.

DUNGARREN.

Indeed thou art wrong.

VIOLET.

Be thou charitable, then, and forgive me ; but for the present let us part.

[Exit into the house.]

DUNGARREN (*alone*).

Her behaviour is strange and perplexing. Was her anger assumed or sincere? Was she, or was she not, on that accursed moor? "Some silly girl bewildered by the storm at her trysting place," — were not these her words? Ay, by my faith! and glancing at the truth too obviously; at the hateful, the distracting, the hitherto unsuspected truth. It is neither witch, warlock, nor devil, with whom she held her tryste. Yea, but it is a devil, whom I will resist to perdition! It is a devil who will make me one also. O, this proud rising of my heart! it gives the cruelty of distraction; and, but for the fear of God within me, would nerve my hand for blood.

Re-enter VIOLET, in alarm, from the house.

VIOLET.

Oh Robert, Robert! what mean those tossings of the arms — those gestures of distraction? You doubt my faith, you think me unworthy, and it moves you to this fearful degree. If I deserve your attachment I deserve to be trusted.

Think of this, dear Robert, for it kills me to see you so miserable.

DUNGARREN.

Dear! you call me dear, only because you pity me.

VIOLET.

I call thee dear, because — because — Out on thee, Robert Kennedy! hast thou no more generosity than this? (*Bursting into tears.*)

DUNGARREN (*catching her in his arms, then unclasping her suddenly and dropping on his knee*).

O forgive me, forgive me! I have treated thee ungenerously and unjustly: forgive me, my own sweet girl!

VIOLET.

I will not only forgive thee, but tell thee every thing when I am at liberty to do so. Let us now separate; I have need of rest.

[*He leads her towards the house, caressing her hand tenderly as they go; then exeunt severally.*]

SCENE III.

A Passage or Entrance-room in the Tower.

Enter ANDERSON.

ANDERSON (*looking off the Stage*).

What's the cunning loon standing, wi' his lug sae near that door for? (*Calling loud.*) What's tu doing there, rascal?

Enter BAWLDY.

Wha gies thee leave to come near the chambers o' gentle folks, and lay thy blackened lug sae close to the key-hole?

BAWLDY.

As for gentle folks, they come to me oftener nor I gang to them; and as for my lug, there was nae need to lay it to the key-hole whan the door was half open.

ANDERSON.

Catch thee who can unprovided wi' a ready answer! Thou hast the curiosity o' the deevil in thee and his cunning to boot: what business hast thou to pry into people's secrets?

BAWL DY.

A secret, forsooth, tauld wi' an open door and voices as loud as twa wives cracking in the lone ! And gude be wi' us a' ! they war only talking o' what we are a' talking or thinking o' fra' morning till night and fra' Sabbath day till Saturday.

ANDERSON.

And what is that, ne'er-do-weel ?

BAWLDRY.

What should it be but witchcraft and the young leddy ? But this last bout, I trow, is the strangest bout of a'.

ANDERSON.

What has happened now ?

BAWL DY.

As I was passing by the door, I heard Nurse tell the Leddy Annabell how the young leddy was frightened frae her rest, as she lay in her bed, wi' the room darkened.

ANDERSON.

And how was that ?

BAWL DY.

Witches cam' into the room, I canna tell how mony o' them, and ane o' them cam' upon the bed, and a'maist smoored her.

ANDERSON.

The Lord preserve us !

BAWLDY.

Ay ; and she would hae been smoored a'the-gither, gin she had na claught haud of the witch's arm, and squeezed it sae hard that the witch ran awa', and left a piece o' her gown sleeve in the young leddy's han'.

ANDERSON.

It was Grizeld Bane or Mary Macmurren, I'll be bound for 't.

BAWLDY.

Wha it was she could na say, for she could na see i' the dark.

ANDERSON.

But the piece of the gown sleeve will reveal it. Show me that, and I'll ken wha it was, to a certainty. I ken ilka gown and garment belonging to them.

BAWLDY.

So does Nurse, too : but the young leddy took a fit, as the roodies left the chaumer, and she has lost the clout.

ANDERSON.

That was a pity. The chamber maun be searched for it carefully, else they'll come again, and wi' some cantrup or ither, join it into the sleeve it was riven frae, as if it ne'er had been riven at a'. But gang to thy crowdy, man, and dinna tine a meal for a marvel. Thou hast nae busi-

ness here : the kitchen and the byre set thee better than lobbies and chambers. [*Exit BAWLDY.*] That callant lurks about the house like a brownie. He's a clever varlet, too : he can read the kittle names in the Testament, and ding the dominie himsel at the quastions and caratches. He's as cunning and as covetous as ony gray-haired sinner i' the parish ;—a convenient tool, I suspect, in the hands of a very artful woman. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.

The Apartment of ANNABELLA, who enters, and throws herself into a chair, remaining silent for a short time, and then speaks impatiently.

ANNABELLA.

What can detain her so long? Could she miss finding him? He is seldom far off at this hour of the day, when broth and beef are on the board ; and he can send a boy to the hill as his substitute. I wish the sly creature were come ; for time passes away, and with it, perhaps, opportunity.

Enter PHEMY.

PHEMY.

He's here, Madam.

ANNABELLA.

That 's well. Let him enter immediately, and do thou keep watch in the outer room.

Exit PHEMY, and presently BAWLDY enters.

I want thee to do an errand for me again, Bawldy. Do not look so grave and so cowed, man : thou shalt be well paid for it.

BAWLDY.

A'tweel, I 'm ready enough to do ony errand, gin there be nae witchery concerned wi 't.

ANNABELLA.

And what the worse wilt thou be if there should ? Didst thou not go to Grizeld Bane this morning, and return safe and sound as before, both soul and body, with a good crown in thy pocket to boot ?

BAWLDY.

Certes my body cam' back safe enough ; but for my puir saul, Lord hae mercy on it ! for when I gaed to my kye on the hill again, I tried to croon o'er to mysel the hunder and saxteen psalm, and second commandment, and could hardly remember a word o' them. Oh ! she's an awfu' witch, and scares the very wit frae ane's noddle.

ANNABELLA.

Never fear, Bawldy : she has left thee enough of that behind to take care of thine own interest. Thou hadst wit enough, at least, to do thy business with her ; for she came to me in good time, to the spot which I appointed.

BAWL DY.

If she kens the place, she may meet you there again, without my ganging after her. The Lord preserve us ! I wadna enter that house again for twa crowns.

ANNABELLA.

Be not afraid, man : it is not to that house I would send thee ; and thou *shalt* have two crowns for thy errand, though it be both an easy and a short one.

BAWL DY.

As for that, Madam, an it war baith lang an' hard, I wadna mind it, so as it be an errand a Christian body *may* do.

ANNABELLA.

A Christian body may go and speak a few words privately to Mrs. Violet Murrey's pretty maid, I should think.

BAWL DY (*sheepishly*).

There's nae great harm in that, to be sure.

ANNABELLA.

And a Christian body may slip a crown quietly into her hand, and ——

BAWLDY (*interrupting her in a low murmuring voice*).

Ay, ane o' the twa ye spak o'.

ANNABELLA.

No, indeed, Bawldy ; a third crown, which I will give thee to take from thine own pocket, and put into her pretty hand. — Perhaps it may prove the forerunner of some other token between you. She is a good tight girl, but a few years older than thyself : she may take a fancy to thee.

BAWLDY.

Ah ! Madam Annabell, somebody has been telling you that I hae a fancy for her ; for they never devall wi' their havers. — But what is she to do for the crown ? for I reckon she maun won it some way or anither.

ANNABELLA.

In a very easy way. Tell her to send me her mistress's striped lutestring gown, for I want to look at the pattern of it, and will restore it to her immediately.

BAWL DY.

Is that a' ?

ANNABELLA.

Only thou must make her promise to conceal, from her mistress and from every body, that I borrowed the gown. Be sure to do that, Bawldy.

BAWL DY.

That's very curious, now. Whaur wad be the harm o' telling that ye just looket at it.

ANNABELLA.

Thou'rt so curious, boy, there's no concealing any thing from thee. Art thou silly enough to believe that I only want to look at it?

BAWL DY.

Na, I guessed there was somewhat ahint it.

ANNABELLA.

And thou shalt know the whole, if thou wilt promise to me solemnly not to tell any body.

BAWL DY.

I'll tell naebody. Gif my ain mither war to speer, she wad ne'er get a word anent it frae me.

ANNABELLA.

I have been consulting with Grizeld Bane, about what can be done to relieve our poor sick child from her misery, — for those who put her into it can best tell how to draw her out of it, — and she says, a garment that has been upon the

body of a murderer, or the child of a murderer, — it does not matter which, — put under the pillow of a witched bairn, will recover it from fits, were it ever so badly tormented. But, mark me well! should the person who owns the garment ever come to the knowledge of it, the fits will return again, as bad as before. Dost thou understand me?

BAWL DY.

I understand you weel enough: but will witches speak the truth, whan the deil is their teacher?

ANNABELLA.

Never trouble thy head about that: we can but try. Fetch me the gown from thy sweetheart, and thou shalt have more money than this, by and by. (*Gives him money.*)

BAWL DY.

Since you will ca' her my sweetheart, I canna help it; though I ken weel enough it's but mocking.

ANNABELLA.

Go thy ways, and do as I bid thee, without loss of time, and thou wilt soon find it good, profitable earnest. She will make a very good thrifty wife, and thou a good muirland drover, when thou'rt old enough. [*Exit BAWL DY.*]

ANNABELLA (*alone*).

Now shall I have what I panted for, and far better, too, than I hoped. To be tormented by witchcraft is bad; but to be accused and punished for it is misery so exquisite, that, to purchase it for an enemy, were worth a monarch's ransom. Ay, for an enemy like this, who has robbed me of my peace, stolen the affections of him whom I have loved so ardently and so long; yea, who has made me, in his sight, hateful and despicable. I will bear my agony no longer. The heart of Dungarren may be lost for ever; but revenge is mine, and I will enjoy it.—— It is a fearful and dangerous pleasure, but all that is left for me.—— Oh, oh! that I should live to see him the doating lover of a poor, homely — for homely she is, let the silly world call her what they please — artful girl, disgraced and degraded; the daughter of a murderer, saved only from the gibbet by suicide or accident! That I should live to witness this!—— But having lived to witness it, can revenge be too dearly purchased? No; though extremity of suffering in this world, and beyond this world, were the price—— Cease, cease! ye fearful thoughts! I shall but accuse her of that of which she is, perhaps, really guilty. Will this be so wicked, so unpardonable? How could a creature like this despoil such a woman

as myself of the affections of Dungarren, or any man, but by unholy arts?

Enter PHEMY in alarm.

PHEMY.

Madam, Madam! there are people in the passage.

ANNABELLA.

And what care I for that?

PHEMY.

You were speaking so loud, I thought there was somebody with you. (*Looking fearfully round.*)

ANNABELLA.

Whom dost thou look for? Could any one be here without passing through the outer room?

PHEMY.

I crave your pardon, Madam, they can enter by holes, as I have heard say, that would keep out a moth or a beetle.

ANNABELLA.

Go, foolish creature! Thy brain is wild with the tales thou hast heard in this house. — Did I speak so loud?

PHEMY.

Ay, truly, Madam, and with such violent

changes of voice, that I could not believe you alone.

ANNABELLA.

I was not aware of it. It is a natural infirmity, like talking in one's sleep : my mother had the same. — I'll go to the garden, where the flowers and fresh air will relieve me.

PHEMY.

Are you unwell?

ANNABELLA.

Yes, girl ; but say so to no one, I pray thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *A half-formed Cave, partly roofed with rock and partly open to the sky, which is seen through the overhanging bushes ; a Burn or Brook crossing the mouth of it, at the bottom of the Stage, banked by precipitous rocks mixed with wood and fern.*

VOICE (*heard without*).

Indeed, thou canst not pass this way.

SECOND VOICE (*without*).

I don't mind it at all ; the water will do me no harm.

FIRST VOICE (*without*).

Thou shalt not wet thy feet, my dear child, when a father's arms are here, so able and so happy to carry thee.

Enter MURREY by the mouth of the cave, bearing VIOLET in his arms, whom he sets down by some loose rocks near the front of the Stage.

VIOLET.

Set me down, my dear father ; I am heavy.

MURREY.

I could carry thee to the world's end, my own dear girl. O that thou wert again a baby, and mine arms lock'd round thee as of yore !

VIOLET.

I remember it, father.

MURREY.

Dost thou, sweet one ? Ah, ah ! thee in my arms, and she whom I loved by my side, and thy pretty worldless lips cooing to us by turns — an utterance that made all words contemptible ! Alas, alas ! such days, and many bright succeeding days have been and are gone. The fatal passion of a few short moments has made

me a homeless outlaw, while reproach, instead of protection, is a father's endowment for thee.

(Sits down on a low detached rock, and buries his face in the folds of his plaid.)

VIOLET.

Dear, dear father ! do not reproach yourself so harshly. If the world call what you have done by a very dreadful name, it is not a true one : equal fighting, though for a foolish quarrel, deserves not that appellation.

MURREY.

Whatever it may deserve, it will have it, when there is no witness to prove the contrary. Fatheringham alone was present, and he disappeared on the instant. When my trial came, I could not prove that the man I had slain fell in equal combat ; nay, was the real aggressor in first attacking me.

VIOLET.

It was cowardly and strange, — it was not the act of a friend to disappear and leave you so exposed.

MURREY.

Some evil fate befell him : he was not alive, I am certain, when I was apprehended, else he would have come forward like an honest, manly friend in my justification. The sentence of death

is upon me ; the mark of Cain is on my forehead ; I am driven from the fellowship of men.

VIOLET.

Say not so ; for you have by the accidental death of your servant been, as it were, providentially saved from a fearful end ; and being so saved, I must needs believe that some better fortune is in reserve for you.

MURREY.

Ay, poor Donald ! I believe he would willingly have died for my sake, and Providence did so dispose of him. I little thought, after my escape from prison, when I had changed apparel with him, how completely our identity was to be confounded. He lies in the grave as James Murrey of Torwood, — in an unhallowed grave, as a murderer.

VIOLET.

Were you near him when he fell into the pit ?

MURREY.

Dear Violet, thou art bewildered to ask me such a question ! When we had changed clothes completely, and I had even forced upon him as a gift, which he well deserved, the gold watch and seals of my family, we parted ; and when his body was discovered, many weeks afterwards, the face, as I understand, from the mutilations of bruises and corruption, was no longer recog-

nizable. But this is a mournful subject, and it is useless to dwell upon it now.

VIOLET.

Very true; let us speak of those things for which there is still cause of thankfulness. The Irish home you have found on the mountains of Wicklow, is it not a pleasant one?

MURREY.

Pleasant to those who look on sky and cliff, on wood and torrent, to rouse and refresh the mind, in the intervals of such retirement as hath a purpose and a limit. To the lonely outcast what scene is pleasant? The meanest man who plies his honest trade in the narrow lane of a city, where passers-by may wish him a good day, or bid God speed him, has a domicile and a home which I think of with envy.

VIOLET.

O do not, then, live any longer in this deserted situation!

MURREY.

I know what thou wilt offer, but it must not be.

VIOLET.

Why so? Since I have lost my dear mother, and have no farther duties to detain me here, may I not cross the sea with you now, and spend

some time with you in Wicklow. It will be thought that I am gone to visit our Irish relation.

MURREY.

No, my affectionate child, that may not be.

VIOLET.

I should go to our relation first, and nobody should know that I went anywhere else but Dungarren; nor should I even tell it to him without your permission.

MURREY (*rising quickly from his seat*).
Which thou shalt never have.

VIOLET.

Why do you utter those words so vehemently?
He is honourable and true.

MURREY.

He is thy lover, and thou believest him to be so.

VIOLET.

Are you displeased that he is my lover?

MURREY.

Yes, I am displeased, for he will never be thy husband.

VIOLET.

O think not so hardly of him! in his heart there is honour even stronger than affection. And if I might but tell him of your being alive ——

MURREY.

Art thou mad? art thou altogether bereft of understanding? Swear to me, on the faith of a Christian woman, that thou wilt never reveal it.

VIOLET.

He is incapable of betraying any one, and far less —

MURREY.

Hold thy tongue! hold thy tongue, simple creature! Every man seems true to the woman whose affections he hath conquered. I know the truth of man and the weakness of woman. Reason not with me on the subject, but solemnly promise to obey me. I should feel myself as one for whom the rope and the gibbet are preparing, should any creature but thyself know of my being alive.

VIOLET.

Woe is me! this is misery indeed.

MURREY.

Do not look on me thus with such mingled pity and surprise. Call what I feel an excess of distrust — a disease — a perversion of mind, if thou wilt, but solemnly promise to obey me.

VIOLET.

Let my thoughts be what they may, I dare not resist the will of a parent; I solemnly pro-

mise (*looking up to heaven, and then bending her head very low*).

MURREY.

I am satisfied, and shall return to my boat, which waits for me on the Clyde, near the mouth of this burn, with a mind assured on so important a point, and assured of thy good conduct and affection. (*Looking about, alarmed.*) I hear a noise.

VIOLET.

'Tis the moving of some owlet or hawk in the refts of the rock over-head. To this retired spot of evil report no human creature ever ventures to come, even at mid-day.

MURREY.

Yes, I remember it used to be called the Warlock's den, and had some old legendary pretensions to the name. But there is a noise. (*Looks up to the open part of the cave, and discovers DUNGARREN above, looking down upon them.*)

VIOLET.

It is Dungarren; what shall we do? Begone, father?

MURREY.

I must stand to it now; he will be down upon us in an instant: it is too late to avoid him.

VIOLET.

No, it is not ; he shall not come down. (*Calling up to him.*) Robert Kennedy, is it thou ?

DUNGARREN (*above*).

Does the voice of Violet Murrey dare to ask me the question ?

VIOLET.

Stay where thou art, and come no farther ; I dare ask of thee to be secret and to be generous.

DUNGARREN (*above*).

Distracting and mysterious creature, I obey thee. (*Retires.*)

VIOLET.

He retires, and we are safe. Let us now separate. (*In a low voice.*) Farewell, my dear father ! you will come and see me again ?

MURREY.

I hope next summer to pay thee another and a less hurried visit. Farewell. (*Holding her back.*) No, no ! do not embrace me.

VIOLET.

He has retired, and will not look again.

MURREY.

Be not too confident. Farewell, and remember thy solemn promise. My ship will sail for

Ireland to-morrow morning early, and thou shalt hear from me soon.

[Exit by the way he entered.]

VIOLET (*alone*).

If they should meet without, and they may do so! — But that must not be. (*Calling in a loud voice.*) Dungarren, Dungarren! art thou still within hearing?

(DUNGARREN *reappears above.*)

I cannot speak to thee in so loud a voice; come down to me here.

[He descends by the jutting rocks into the bottom of the cave in the dress and accoutrements of an angler, with a fishing-rod in his hand, and stands before her with a stern and serious look, remaining perfectly silent.]

O Robert Kennedy! look not on me thus! I meant to thank you for your friendly forbearance, but now I have no utterance: I cannot speak to you when you so look upon me.

DUNGARREN.

Silence is best where words were vain and worthless.

VIOLET.

You deserve thanks, whether you accept them or not.

DUNGARREN.

To obey the commands of a lady deserves none.

VIOLET.

Nay, but it does, and I thank you most gratefully. He who was with me is gone, but — but —

DUNGARREN.

But will return again, no doubt, when the face of a casual intruder will not interrupt your conference.

VIOLET.

O no! he will not return — may never return. Who he is, and where he goes, and how I am bound to him, O how I long to tell thee all, and may not!

DUNGARREN.

What I have seen with mine eyes leaves you nothing to tell which I am concerned to hear.

VIOLET.

Be it so, then; since the pride of your heart so far outmates its generosity.

DUNGARREN.

You have put it out of my power to be generous; but you desire me to be secret, and shall be obeyed. Is it your pleasure, madam, that I should conduct you to your home, since he who was with you is gone?

VIOLET.

That I accept of a service so offered, shows too well how miserably I am circumstanced. But I do accept it: let me leave this place.
(*Goes toward the mouth of the cave.*)

DUNGARREN.

Not by the burn, the water is too deep.

VIOLET.

I came by it, and there is no other way.

DUNGARREN.

Came by it, and dry-shod too! (*Looking at her feet.*) He who was with thee must have carried thee in his arms.

VIOLET.

Yes, he did so; but now I will walk through the stream: wet feet will do me no injury.

DUNGARREN.

There is another passage through a cleft rock on this side, concealed by the foxglove and fern.

VIOLET.

Lead on, then, and I'll follow.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*A large Hall or Entrance-room, with deer's horns
and arms hanging on the walls.*

*Enter Nurse with a tankard in her hand, followed
presently by ANDERSON, who calls after her as
she is about to disappear by the opposite side.*

ANDERSON.

Nurse, Nurse, I say! Is the woman deaf?

NURSE.

What are ye roaring after me for? Can a
body get nae peace or comfort ony time o' the
day or night? Neither o' them, by my trouth,
bring muckle rest to me.

ANDERSON.

That may be, but ye'r tankard comforts, that
belang, as it wad seem, to baith day and night,
maun be stinted at present; for the sheriff and
a' his rascally officers frae Paisley are at the yett,
and writers beside, Lord preserve us! wi' ink-
horns at their buttons and paper in their hands.
Gae tell the Leddy quickly, and set ye'r tankard
down.

NURSE.

For the sheriff officers to lay their lugs in. Na, na! sma'er browst may serve them; I'll mak' sure o' some o't. [*Takes a drink, and exit.*]

ANDERSON.

I wonder whaur the laird is : its an unchancy time for him to be out of the gaet. Donald, Donald !

Enter DONALD.

Whaur's the laird ? He should be here to receive the sheriff.

DONALD.

He's no in the house.

ANDERSON.

Gang and find him in the fields, then.

DONALD.

He's no in the fields, neither.

ANDERSON.

Whaur is he, then ?

DONALD.

He'll be a clever fellow, I reckon, that finds him on the hither side o' Dumbarton.

ANDERSON.

How dost tu ken that sa weel ? What suld tak him to Dumbarton ?

DONALD.

His ain ill humour, I believe, for he returned fra' the fishing wi' his knit brows as grumly as a thunner cloud on the peak o' Benloman, and desired me to saddle his meir : and he took the road to the ferry without speaking anither word ; and the last sight I gat o' the meir and him was frae the black craig head, whan they war baith in the boat thegether, half way over the Clyde.

ANDERSON.

That's unlucky : I maun gang to the yett and receive the sheriff mysel, as creditably as I can.

DONALD.

Ye may save yoursel that trouble, I trow, for he has made his way into the house already.

Enter the Sheriff with his Officers and Attendants, and Servants of the family following them.

SHERIFF (*to* ANDERSON).

We would see the Laird of Dungarren.

ANDERSON.

He's frae hame, an please your honour.

SHERIFF.

From home ! are you sure of this ? we come on no unfriendly errand.

ANDERSON.

I mak' nae dout o' that, your honour : but he is frae hame, and far a-field, too.

SHERIFF.

That is unfortunate ; for I am here officially to examine the members of his household. His mother, I presume, is at home?

ANDERSON.

Yes, your honour ; the leddy is at hame, and will come to you immediately.

SHERIFF.

It is said you have been disturbed with strange noises and visitations in this family, and that the young lady is more tormented than ever. What kind of noises have been heard?

ANDERSON.

O Lord, your honour, sic elrich din ! I can compare it to nothing. Sometimes it's like the soughing o' wind ; sometimes like the howling o' dogs.

DONALD (*taking the word from him*).

Sometimes like the mewling o' cats ; sometimes like the clattering o' broomsticks.

FIRST SERVANT (*pressing forward, and taking the word from DONALD*).

Sometimes like the hooting o' howlets ; and sometimes like a black sow grunting.

SHERIFF.

A black sow grunting!

DONALD.

Ay, please your honour. The grunt of a black sow is as deil-like as its colour: I wad ken't, in the dark, frae ony white sow that ever wore a snout.

SHERIFF.

Well, sometimes hooting of owlets, and the grunting of a black sow.

ANDERSON, DONALD, *and* FIRST SERVANT (*all speaking at once*).

And sometimes like a ——

SHERIFF.

Spare me, spare me, good folks! I can listen but to one at a time.

Enter LADY DUNGARREN, ANNABELLA, PHEMY,
Nurse, *and* Maid-servants.

Good day, and my good service to you, Lady Dungarren. I'm sorry the laird is from home: my visit may perhaps disturb you.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Do not say so, Sheriff; I am at all times glad to see you; but were it otherwise, we are too well accustomed to be disturbed in this miserable house, to think much of any thing.

SHERIFF.

I am very sorry for it, — very sorry that your daughter continues so afflicted. — (*Showing her a paper.*) Have you any knowledge of this paper? The information contained in it is the cause of my present intrusion.

LADY DUNGARREN (*after having looked over it attentively*).

I know nothing of the paper itself; but the information it conveys is true.

SHERIFF.

Have you ever seen the hand-writing before?

LADY DUNGARREN.

No — yes — I think I have. Look at it, Annabella: it is somewhat like your own.

ANNABELLA (*in a hurried manner*).

Dear Madam, how can you say so? The l's, and the m's, and the n's are all joined stiffly together, and you know very well that I never join my letters at all.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Very true, cousin; I see there is a great difference now, and I don't know whose hand it is, though doubtless the hand of a friend; for we cannot remain in this misery much longer. It should be examined into, that the guilty may be

punished, and prevented from destroying my poor child entirely.

SHERIFF.

Has any person of evil repute been admitted to see her? Who has been in her chamber?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Who has been visibly in her chamber, we can easily tell; but who has been invisibly there, the Lord in heaven knows.

SHERIFF.

Have they never been visible to the child herself whom they torment?

LADY DUNGARREN.

She has stared, as though she saw them.

ANNABELLA.

She has shrieked, as though they laid hold of her.

NURSE.

She has clenched her hands, as if she had been catching at them, in this way. (*Showing how.*)

PHEMY.

Ay, and moved her lips so (*showing how*), as if speaking to them. I saw her do it.

NURSE.

And so did I; and I saw her grin, and shake her head so, most piteously.

PHEMY, NURSE, *and* MAID-SERVANT (*all speaking at once*).

And I saw her ——

SHERIFF.

Softly, softly, good women! Three tellers are too many for one tale, and three tales are too many for one pair of ears to take in at a time. — (*Turning to the Lady.*) Has she ever told you that she saw witches by her bed-side?

LADY DUNGARREN.

Yes; several times she has told me so, in wild and broken words.

SHERIFF.

Only in that manner.

ANNABELLA.

You forget, Madam, to mention to the Sheriff, that she told us distinctly, a few hours ago, how a witch had been sitting on her breast, as she lay in bed; and that, when she struggled to get rid of her, she rent a piece from the sleeve of her gown.

SHERIFF.

The witch rent the sleeve from her gown?

NURSE.

No, no, your honour; our poor child rent a piece frae the sleeve o' the witch's gown.

SHERIFF.

Has the piece been found?

A great many, speaking at once.

Ay, ay! it has! it has!

SHERIFF.

Silence, I say!—(*To ANNABELLA.*) Have the goodness to answer, Madam: has the rag been preserved?

ANNABELLA.

It has, Sir; but it is no rag, I assure you.

NURSE.

As good silk, your honour, as ever came frae the Luckenbooths of Edinburgh.

SHERIFF.

Are not witches always old and poor? The devil must have helped this one to a new gown, at least; and that is more than we have ever heard of his doing to any of them before.

ANNABELLA.

We have read of witches who have been neither old nor poor.

SHERIFF.

Ha! is there warrantry, from sober sensible books, for such a notion? I am no great scholar on such points: it may be so.—But here comes the minister: his better learning will assist us.

Enter MR. RUTHERFORD.

I thank you, my reverend Sir, for obeying my

notice so quickly. Your cool head will correct our roused imaginations : you believe little, I have heard, of either apparitions or witches.

RUTHERFORD.

My faith on such subjects was once, indeed, but weak.

SHERIFF.

And have you changed it lately ? — (*A pause for RUTHERFORD to answer, but he is silent.*) Since when has your faith become stronger ?

After a short pause as before, several Voices call out eagerly —

Since the storm on Friday night ; when Mary Macmurren and a' the crew were on the moor.

SHERIFF.

Silence, I say again ! Can the minister not answer for himself, without your assistance ? — You heard my question, Mr. Rutherford : were you upon the moor on that night ?

RUTHERFORD.

I was.

SHERIFF.

And saw you aught upon the moor contrary to godliness and nature ?

RUTHERFORD.

What I saw, I will declare in fitter time and place, if I must needs do so.

SHERIFF.

Well, well, you are cautious, good Sir ; and, perhaps, it is wise to be so. — Lady Dungarren, with your permission, I will go into the sick chamber and examine your daughter myself.

LADY DUNGARREN.

You have my permission most willingly. Follow me immediately, if you please, and ask the poor child what questions you think fit. Mr. Rutherford, do you choose to accompany us ?

[Exeunt LADY DUNGARREN, ANNABELLA, Sheriff, and RUTHERFORD ; ANDERSON, Nurse, DONALD, &c. &c. remaining.]

ANDERSON.

And he'll gie nae answer at a', even to the Sheriff.

NURSE.

Certes, were he ten times a minister, he should hae tauld what he saw to the Sheriff of the county.

DONALD.

A gentleman born and bred, and the king's appointed officer into the bargain.

NURSE.

And he winna tell what he saw afore us, forsooth — for that's what he means by fitter time and place — foul befa' his discretion ! He wad-

na believe in witches, I trow; but they hae cowed him weel for 't at last.

ANDERSON.

To be sure, he looket baith ghastly and wan, when the Sheriff speered what he saw upon the moor.

NURSE.

Ay, ay, it was some fearfu' sight, nae doubt. God's grace preserve us a' ! the very thought o' what it might be gars my head grow could like a turnip.

DONALD.

It was surely something waur than witches dancing that frightened the minister.

NURSE.

As ye say, Donald : either Highlander or Lowlander has wit enough to guess that. I like nane o' your ministers that'll speak naewhere but in the pu'pit. Fitter time and place, quotha !

ANDERSON.

Hoot, toot, woman ! he has gotten his lear at the college, and he thinks shame to be frightened.

NURSE.

Foul befa' him and his lear too ! It maun be o' some new-fangled kind, I think. Our auld minister had lear enough, baith Hebrew and Latin, and he believed in witches and warlocks, honest man, like ony ither sober, godly person.

ANDERSON.

So he did, Nurse ; ye 're a sensible woman, but somewhat o' the loudest, whan ye 're angry. Thae gude folks want some refection, I trow ; and there 's gude yill and ham in the buttery.— Come, Sirs, follow me.

[Exit, with a courteous motion of the hand, followed by the Sheriff's Officers, &c. PHEMY and Nurse remaining.]

NURSE.

Whaur can Black Bauldy be a' this while ? His smooty face is seldom missing whan ony mischief is ganging on ?

PHEMY.

What do you want with him ?

NURSE.

To send him owre the craft for the new-laid eggs, that the ploughman's wife promised us.

PHEMY.

He has been sent further off on another errand already.

NURSE.

And wha sent him, I should like to ken, whan we are a' sae thrang ?

PHEMY.

My lady sent him.

NURSE.

Your leddy, say ye! She has grown unco intimate wi' that pawky loon o' late : I wish gude may come o' t. I maun gang for the eggs mysel, I warrant. — But I maun e'en gang first to the chaumer door, and listen a wee; though we'll only hear the hum o' their voices, an our lugs war as gleg as the coley's.

PHEMY.

And I'll go with you too : the hum of their voices is worth listening for, if nothing more can be heard. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An open Space before the Abbey Church of Paisley.*

Enter the Sheriff and RUTHERFORD, in earnest discourse.

SHERIFF.

Yes, you may, indeed, be well assured that I have never, during all the years in which I have

served the office of sheriff of this county, performed a duty so painful ; and I am very sensible that what I am compelled to summon you to perform, is still more distressing.

RUTHERFORD.

Were it not sinful, I could wish myself incapable, from disease or disaster, or any other let, of giving legal testimony. Oh ! to think of it clouds my brain with confusion, and makes me sick at heart ! Violet Murrey, the young, the unfortunate, the gentle, and, I firmly believe, the innocent, — to give evidence to her prejudice, — it is a fearful duty !

SHERIFF.

It is so, good Sir ; yet it must be done. I have taken into custody, on accusation of witchcraft, the fairest woman in the west of Scotland ; and you must answer on oath to the questions that may be put to you, whether it be for or against her. If she be innocent, Providence will protect her.

Enter the Chief Baillie of Paisley behind them, and listens to the conclusion of the above speech.

BAILLIE.

If she be innocent ! Can any one reasonably suppose that such a creature would be accused,

or even suspected, but on the strongest proofs of guilt? Some old haggard beldame, with an ill name at any rate, might be wrongfully suspected; but Violet Murrey, good sooth! must have been where she should not have been, ere a tongue or a finger in the county would have wagged to her prejudice.

SHERIFF.

That 's what your wife says, I suppose.

BAILLIE.

By my faith, Sheriff, it 's what every body says; for it stands to reason.

RUTHERFORD.

That it stands to folly, would be an apter cause for every body's saying it, my worthy Baillie.

BAILLIE.

Grace be with us all! does a minister of the Gospel set his face against that for which there be plain texts of Scripture? And when cattle are drained dry, children possessed, storms raised, houses unroofed, noises in the air, and every one's heart beating with distrust and fear of his neighbour, — is this a time for us to stand still, and leave free scope for Satan and his imps to lord it over a sober and godly land? By my certes! I would carry faggots with my own hands to burn my nearest of kin, though her cheeks were like

roses, and her hair like threads of gold, if she were found, but for one night, joining in the elrich revelry of a devil's conventicle. (*A distant trumpet heard.*) Ha! the judges so near the town already!

SHERIFF.

Would they were further off! they come sooner than I reckoned for.

BAILLIE.

Soon or late, we must go to meet them, as in duty bound.—You take precedence, Sheriff: I will follow you. [*Exeunt Sheriff and Baillie.*

RUTHERFORD (*alone*).

What is or is not in this mysterious matter, lies beyond human reason to decide. That I must swear to the truth of what I have seen, when questioned thereupon by authority, is my only clear point of discernment. Hard necessity! My heart, in despite of every proof, whispers to me she is innocent. (*A loud brawling and tumult heard without.*) What noise is this? —The senseless exasperated crowd besetting one of those miserable women who held orgies on the heath on that dreadful night.

Enter MARY MACMURREN and WILKIN, in the custody of Constables, and surrounded by a crowd, who are casting dust at her, &c. The Constables endeavouring to keep them off.

FIRST WOMAN.

Deil's hag! she'll pay for her pastime now, I trow.

SECOND WOMAN.

For a' the milk kye she has witched.

FIRST WOMAN.

For a' the bonnie bairns she has blasted.

FIRST MAN.

She girns like a brock at a terry-dog.

SECOND MAN.

Score her aboon the breath, or she'll cast a cantrup, and be out o' your han's in a twinkling.

MARY MACMURREN.

What gars ye rage at me sae? I ne'er did nae harm to nane o' ye.

FIRST WOMAN.

Hear till her! hear till her! how she lees!

FIRST MAN.

And what for no? Leeing is the best o' their lear, that hae the deel for their dominie.

SECOND MAN.

Ay, wicket witch; leeing's nought to her:

but we'll gie her something forbye words for an answer. Wha has gotten a jocteleg to score the wrinkled brow o' her?

THIRD MAN (*offering a knife*).

Here! here!

[*The crowd rush furiously upon her, and are with difficulty kept off by the Constables.*]

FIRST CONSTABLE.

Stand back, I say, every mither's son o' ye, an' every faither's daughter to boot. If the woman be a witch winna she be burnt for 't, as ithers o' that calling hae been afore her? Isna that enough to content ye?

FIRST MAN.

Ay, we'll soon see that ugly face, glowering through the smoke o' her benfire, like a howlet in the stour of an auld cowping barn.

SECOND MAN.

An that piece o' young warlockry by her side, see how *he* glow'rs at us! Can tu squeek, imp? (*Trying to pinch WILKIN, who calls out.*)

WILKIN.

O dull, o' dear! the're meddling wi' me.

FIRST CONSTABLE.

Shame upon ye, shame upon ye a'! Ha' ye nae better way o' warring wi' the deel than tormenting a poor idiot?

MARY MACMURREN.

Shame upon ye ! he's a poor fatherless idiot.

FIRST WOMAN.

Fatherless, forsooth ! He's a fiend-begotten imp I warrant ye, and should be sent to the dad he belongs to. *(Trumpet heard nearer.)*

FIRST CONSTABLE.

Red the way, I say, and gang out o' our gait, ilka saul and bouk o' ye ! The judges are at han', and my prisoner maun be kary'd or they come, else they'll order ye a' to the tolbooth at a swoop.

[Exeunt Constables with MARY MACMURREN and WILKIN, followed by some of the crowd, while others remain ; the trumpet heard still nearer.]

FIRST MAN.

What a braw thing it is to hear the trumpet sound sae nobly ! There they come now ; the judges, and the sheriff, and the baillies, and the deacons—a' the grand authorities o' the country.

FIRST WOMAN.

Hegh saf' us, what a gurly carle that judge is on the left ! nae witch that stan's before him wull escape, I trow, war' she as young and as bonny as the rose-buds in June.

YOUNG WOMAN.

Hau'd your tongue, mither, that a body may

see them in peace. It's an awfu' thing but to look upon them here: the Lord help them that maun face them in condemnation!

FIRST WOMAN.

Daft bairn! wull the Lord help witches, think'st tu?

Enter Judges in procession, followed by the Sheriff, Baillies, Gentlemen of the county, and Attendants, &c. &c., and passing diagonally across the Stage, exeunt.

SCENE II.

A poor, mean Room in a private house in Paisley.

Enter ANNABELLA, throwing back her hood and mantle as she enters.

ANNABELLA.

Now let me breathe awhile, and enjoy my hard-earned triumph unconstrainedly. — Revenge so complete, so swift-paced, so terrible! It repays me for all the misery I have endured. — May I triumph? dare I triumph? — Why am I astounded and terrified on the very pinnacle of exultation? Were she innocent, Pro-

vidence had protected her. What have I done but contrived the means for proving her guilt? Means which come but in aid of others that would almost have been sufficient.

Enter BLACK BAWLDY.

BAWLDY.

O dool, O dool! she's condemned! she'll be executed, she'll be burnt, she'll be burnt the morn's morning at the cross, and a' through my putting that sorrowfu' gown into your hands, and by foul play, too, foul befa' it! O hone, O hone!

ANNABELLA.

What's all this weeping and wringing of hands for? Art thou distracted?

BAWLDY.

I kenna how I am, I care na how I am; but I winna gang to hell wi' the death of an innocent leddy on my head, for a' the gowd in Christentie.

ANNABELLA.

Poor fool! what makes thee think that the gown thou gottest for me had any thing to do with her condemnation?

BAWLDY.

O you wicked woman! I ken weel enough; and I ken what for you confined me in that back

chammer sae lang, and keepet my brains in sic a whirlegig wi' whiskey and potations.

ANNABELLA.

Thou knowest ! how dost thou know ?

BAWLDY.

I set my lug to a hole in the casement, and heard folks below in the close telling a' about the trial. It was that gown spread out in the court, wi' a hole in the sleeve o't, matching precisely to a piece o' the same silk, which na doubt you tore out yoursel whan it was in your hands, that made baith judge and jury condemn her.

ANNABELLA.

Poor simpleton ! did'st thou not also hear them say, that the minister, sore against his will, swore he saw her on the moor, where the witches were dancing, in company with a man who has been in his grave these three years ? was not that proof enough to condemn her, if there had been nothing more ?

BAWLDY.

It may be sae.

ANNABELLA.

And is so. Is not Mary Macmurren a witch ? and has not she been condemned upon much slighter evidence ? Thou'rt an absolute fool, man, for making such disturbance about nothing.

BAWLDY.

Fool, or nae fool, I'll gang to the sheriff and tell him the truth, and then my conscience wull be clear frae her death, whate'er she may be.

ANNABELLA.

Her death, frightened goose ! Dost thou think she will really be executed ?

BAWLDY.

I heard them say, that she and Mary Macmurren are baith to be brunt the morn's morning.

ANNABELLA.

They said what they knew nothing about. Mary Macmurren will be burnt, for an example to all other witches and warlocks, but a respite and pardon will be given to Violet Murrey : it is only her disgrace, not her death, that is intended ; so thy conscience may be easy.

BAWLDY.

If I could but believe you !

ANNABELLA.

Believe me, and be quiet ; it is the best thing thou canst do for thyself, and for those who are dearest to thee. Be a reasonable creature, then, and promise to me never to reveal what thou knowest.

BAWLDY.

I will keep the secret, then, since she is not to

suffer. But winna you let me out the morn to see the burning o' Mary Macmurren? It wad be a vexatious thing to be sae near till't, and miss sic a sight as that.

ANNABELLA.

Thou shalt have all reasonable indulgence. But what scares thee so?

[*Voice heard without.*]

BAWLDY (*trembling*).

I hear the voice o' Grizeld Bane. She mun ha' been below the grund wi' her master sin' we last gat sight o' her at the tower, else the sheriff officers wad ha' grippet her wi' the rest. — Lord preserve us! is she coming in by the door or the winnoch, or up through the boards o' the flooring? I hear her elrich voice a' round about us, an my lugs ring like the bell o' an amos house.

Enter GRIZELD BANE.

GRIZELD BANE.

Now, my brave lady, my bold lady, my victorious lady! Satan has many great queens in his court, many princesses in his court, many high-blooded beauties in his court; I saw them all last night, sweeping with their long velvet robes the burning pavement of it: thou wilt have no mean mates to keep thee company, and

thou wilt match with the best of them too ; there is both wit and wickedness in thee to perfection.

ANNABELLA.

Hush, hush, Grizeld Bane ! What brings thee here ? Is there not good ale and spirits in thy cellar, and a good bed to rest upon ? What brings thee here ?

GRIZELD BANE.

Shame of my cellar ! think'st thou I have been there all this time ? I have been deeper, and deeper, and deeper than a hundred cellars, every one sunken lower than another.

BAWLDY (*aside to ANNABELLA*).

I tauld you sae, madam.

ANNABELLA (*aside to BAWLDY*).

Go to thy chamber, if thou'rt afraid.

GRIZELD BANE.

Ay, deeper and deeper —

ANNABELLA.

Thou need'st not speak so loud, Grizeld Bane : I understand thee well enough. I hope thou hast been well received where thou wert.

GRIZELD BANE.

Ay ; they received me triumphantly. They scented the blood that will pour and the brands that will blaze ; the groans and the shrieks that

will be uttered were sounding in their ears, like the stormy din of a war-pipe. What will be done to-morrow morning ! Think upon that, my dainty chuck ! and say if I did not deserve a noble reception.

ANNABELLA.

No doubt, with such society as thy imagination holds converse with.

GRIZELD BANE.

Yes, dearest ! and thou, too, hast a noble reception abiding thee.

ANNABELLA (*shrinking back*).

Heaven forbend !

GRIZELD BANE.

Ha, ha, ha ! Art thou frighten'd, dearest ? Do not be frightened ! it is a grand place : my own mate is there, and the cord about his neck changed into a chain of rubies. There is much high promotion abiding thee.

ANNABELLA.

And will have long abiding, I trust, ere I am invested with it.

GRIZELD BANE.

Not so long ; not so long, lady : whenever thou wilt it may be. Dost thou love a clasp'd gorget for thy pretty white neck ? (*Going up to her with a sly grin of affected courtesy, and attempting to grasp her throat.*)

BAWLDY (*springing forward and preventing her*).

Blasted witch ! wad ye throttle her ?

GRIZELD BANE.

Ha ! imp ! hast thou followed me so fast behind ? Down with thee ! down with thee ! There is molten lead and brimstone a-cooking for thy supper ; there's no lack of hot porridge for thee, varlet.

BAWLDY.

Oh madam, oh madam ! what hae ye brought on yoursel and on me, that was but a poor ignorant callant ! O send for the minister at once, and we'll down on our knees, and he'll pray for us. The damnation of the wicked is terrible.

ANNABELLA.

She is but raving : the fumes of her posset have been working in her brain ; be not foolish enough to be frightened at what she says.

BAWLDY.

I wish, O I wish I had never done it ! I wish I had never set eyes or set thoughts on the mammon of unrighteousness. Oh, oh !

GRIZELD BANE (*to BAWLDY*).

Ha, ha, ha ! Thou 'rt frighten'd, art thou ?

ANNABELLA.

Thou see'st she is in jest, and has pleasure in

scaring thee. Go to thy chamber, and compose thyself. (*Calling him back as he is about to go, and speaking in his ear.*) Don't go till she has left me. Hie to thy cellar, Grizeld Bane.

GRIZELD BANE.

And leave thy sweet company, lady?

ANNABELLA.

For a good savoury meal, which is ready for thee; I hear them carrying it thither. Go, go! I have promised to visit Lady Dungarren at a certain hour, and I must leave thee. (*Calling very loud.*) Landlord! Landlord!

Enter Landlord (a strong determined-looking man).

Is Grizeld Bane's meal ready? (*Significantly.*)

LANDLORD.

Yes, madam, and with as good brandy to relish it as either lord or lady could desire. (*To GRIZELD BANE.*) Come, my lofty dame, let me lead you hence. (*Fixing his eyes stedfastly on her face, while she sullenly submits to be led off.*)

Manent ANNABELLA and BAWLDY.

BAWLDY.

The Lord be praised she is gone! for she has been in the black pit o' hell since yestreen, and

wad pu' every body after her an she could.
Dear leddy, send for the minister.

ANNABELLA.

Hold thy foolish tongue, and retire to thy chamber. Violet Murrey's life is safe enough, so thy conscience may be easy. Follow me, for I must lock thee in.

BAWLDY.

Mun I still be a prisoner?

ANNABELLA.

Thou sha'n't be so long; have patience a little while, foolish boy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Prison. VIOLET MURREY is discovered sitting on the ground, by the light of a lamp stuck in the wall; her face hid upon her lap, while a gentle rocking motion of the body shows that she is awake.

Enter DUNGARREN by a low arched door, which is opened cautiously by a turnkey, who immediately shuts it again and disappears.

DUNGARREN (*going close to her, and after a sorrowful pause*).

Violet, O Violet, my once dear Violet! dost

thou know my voice? Wilt thou not raise thy head and look upon me?

VIOLET.

I know your voice : you are very kind to come to me in my misery.

DUNGARREN.

Misery, indeed! Oh that I should see thee thus, — the extremity of human wretchedness closing around thee!

VIOLET (*rising from the ground and standing erect*).

Say not the extremity, Robert Kennedy, for I am innocent.

DUNGARREN.

I will believe it. Ay, in despite of evidence as clear as the recognition of noon-day, — in despite of all evidence, I would believe it. The hateful sin of witchcraft, if such a sin there be, thou hast never committed; it is impossible.

VIOLET.

I know thou wilt believe it: and O! that thou could'st also believe that I am innocent of all falsehood and fickleness of affection! But thou canst not do so; it were unreasonable to expect it. Thou wilt think of me as an ungrateful, deceitful creature; and this is the memory I must leave behind me with Robert of Dungarren.

DUNGARREN.

I forgive thee ! I forgive thee, dear Violet ! for so in thy low estate I will call thee still, though thou lovest another as thou hast never loved me.

VIOLET.

I love him, full surely, as I cannot love thee, but not to the injury of that affection which has always been thine.

DUNGARREN.

I came not here to upbraid : we will speak of this no more.

VIOLET.

Alas, alas ! I should speak and think of things far different, yet this lies on my heart as the heaviest load of all. May God forgive me for it !

DUNGARREN.

And he will forgive thee, my dear friend ! for such I may and will call thee, since I may not call thee more.

VIOLET.

Do, my noble Robert ! that is best of all. And, resting in thy mind as a friend, I know — I am confident, that something will happen, when I am gone, that will discover to thee my faithfulness. Death will soon be past, and thou wilt live to be a prosperous gentleman, and wilt

sometimes think of one —— my evil fame will not —— thou wilt think, ay, wilt speak good of Violet Murrey, when all besides speak evil. Thou wilt not —— (*Bursts into tears.*)

DUNGARREN (*embracing her passionately*).

My dear, dear creature ! dear as nothing else has ever been to me, thou shalt not die : the very thought of it makes me distracted !

VIOLET.

Be not so : it is the manner of it that distresses thee. But has it not been the death of the martyrs, of the holy and the just ; of those, the dust of whose feet I had been unworthy to wipe ? Think of this, and be assured, that I shall be strengthened to bear it.

DUNGARREN.

Oh, oh, oh ! If deliverance should be frustrated !

VIOLET.

What art thou talking of ? thou art, indeed, distracted. Nay, nay ! let not my execution terrify thee so much. I, too, was terrified ; but I have learnt from my gaoler, who has been present at such spectacles, that the sentence, though dreadful, is executed mercifully. The flames will not reach me till I have ceased to breathe ; and many a natural disease doth end the course of life as mine will be terminated.

DUNGARREN.

God forbid ! God help and deliver us !

*(Runs impatiently to a corner of the dungeon,
and puts his ear close to the ground.)*

I do not hear them yet : if they should fail to reach it in time, God help us !

VIOLET.

What dost thou there ? What dost thou listen for ? What dost thou expect ?

DUNGARREN.

Means for thy deliverance, — thy escape.

VIOLET.

Say not so ; it is impossible.

DUNGARREN.

It is possible, and will be, if there's a Providence on earth — if there's mercy in heaven.

(Puts his ear to the ground as before.)

VIOLET *(stooping and listening)*.

I hear nothing. What is it thou expectest to hear ?

DUNGARREN.

I do hear it now : they are near ; they will open upon us presently.

VIOLET.

What dost thou hear ?

DUNGARREN.

The sound of their spades and their mattocks.

O my brave miners ! they will do their work nobly at last.

VIOLET.

A way to escape under ground ! my ears ring and my senses are confounded. Escape and deliverance ?

DUNGARREN.

Yes, love, and friend, and dear human creature ! escape and deliverance are at hand.

VIOLET.

How good and noble thou art to provide such deliverance for me, believing me unfaithful !

DUNGARREN.

Come, come ; that is nothing : be what thou wilt, if I can but save thee ! — Life and death are now on the casting of a die. — The ground moves ; it is life ! (*Tossing up his arms exultingly.*)

VIOLET.

The ground opens : wonderful, unlooked-for deliverance ! Thank God ! thank God ! his mercy has sent it.

[The earthen floor of the dungeon at one corner falls in, making a small opening, and the miners are heard distinctly at work.]

DUNGARREN (*calling down to them*).

May we descend ? are you ready ?

VOICE (*beneath*).

In two minutes the passage will be practicable.

DUNGARREN (*as before*).

Make no delay ; we will pass any how.

VIOLET.

How quickly they have worked, to mine so far under ground since yesterday !

DUNGARREN.

That mine was completed many months ago to favour the escape of a prisoner, who died suddenly in prison before his projected rescue. The secret was revealed to me yesterday, by one of the miners, who had originally conducted the work.

VOICE (*beneath*).

We are ready now.

DUNGARREN.

Heaven be praised ! I will first descend, and receive thee in my arms.

[*As they are about to descend, the door of the dungeon opens, and enter RUTHERFORD and LADY DUNGARREN, accompanied by the Sheriff and Gaoler*].

SHERIFF.

Ha ! company admitted without due permission ! Dungarren here ! Your underling, Mr. Gaoler, is a rogue. How is this ?

GAOLER.

As I am a Christian man, I know no more about it than the child that was born since yestreen.

SHERIFF.

It is only one born since yestreen that will believe thee. A hole in the floor, too, made for concealment and escape! Dungarren, you are my prisoner in the king's name. To favour the escape of a criminal is no slight offence against the laws of the land.

DUNGARREN.

You distract me with your formal authorities : the laws of the land and the laws of God are at variance, for she is innocent.

SHERIFF.

She has abused and bewitched thee to think so ; and a great proof it is of her guilt.

DUNGARREN.

It is you and your coadjutors who are abused, dreadfully and wickedly abused, to hurry on, with such unrighteous obduracy, the destruction of one whom a savage would have spared. Tremble to think of it. At your peril do this.

SHERIFF.

I am as sorry as any man to have such work

to do, but yet it must be done; and at your peril resist the law. Holloa, you without!
(*Calling loud.*)

Enter his Officers, armed.

Take Robert Kennedy, of Dungarren, into custody, in the king's name.

[*The Officers endeavour to lay hold of DUNGARREN, who paces about in a state of distraction.*]

DUNGARREN.

Witchcraft! heaven grant me patience! her life to be taken for witchcraft? senseless idiotical delusion!

SHERIFF (*to Officers*).

Do your duty, fellows: he is beside himself; distracted outright.

VIOLET.

Noble Dungarren! submit to the will of heaven. I am appointed to my hard fate; and God will enable me to bear it. Leave me, my dear friend! be patient, and leave me.

DUNGARREN.

They shall hack me to pieces ere I leave thee.



VIOLET.

Dear Robert, these are wild distracted words, and can be of no avail.—Good Mr. Rutherford, and Lady Dungarren, too; ye came here to comfort me: this I know was your errand, but O comfort him! speak to him, and move him to submission.

RUTHERFORD.

Your present vain resistance, Dungarren, does injury to her whom you wish to preserve.

LADY DUNGARREN.

My son, my Robert, thou art acting like a maniac. Retire with these men, who are only doing their duty, and neither wish to injure nor insult you. I will stay with Violet, and Mr. Rutherford will go with you.

DUNGARREN.

Leave her, to see her no more!

LADY DUNGARREN.

Not so; the sheriff will consent, that you may see her again in the morning, ere ——

SHERIFF.

I do consent: you shall see her in the morning, before she goes forth to — to the — to her ——

DUNGARREN.

To that which is so revolting and horrible,
that no one dare utter it in words. Oh! oh, oh!

*(Groans heavily, and leans his back to the
wall, while his arms drop listlessly by his
side, and the Officers, laying hold of him,
lead him out in a state of faintness and
apathy.)*

RUTHERFORD.

His mind is now exhausted, and unfit for present soothing; attempts to appease and console him must come hereafter; there is time enough for that. *(To VIOLET, with tenderness.)* But thy time is short; I would prepare thee for an awful change. Unless thou be altogether hostile to thoughts of religion and grace, which I can never believe thee to be.

VIOLET.

O no, no! that were a dreadful hostility; and thou, even thou, the good and enlightened Rutherford, my long-tried monitor and friend, can express a doubt whether I am so fearfully perverted. Alas! death is terrible when it comes with disgrace,—with the execration of Christian fellow-creatures! O pray to God for me! pray to God fervently, that I be not overwhelmed with despair.

RUTHERFORD.

I will pray for thee most fervently ; and thou wilt be supported.

VIOLET.

I have been at times, since my condemnation, most wonderfully composed and resigned, as if I floated on a boundless ocean, beneath His eye who says, " Be calm, be still ; it is my doing." But, oh ! returning surges soon swell on every side, tossing, and raging, and yawning tremendously, like gulfs of perdition, so that my senses are utterly confounded. My soul has much need of thy ghostly comfort.

LADY DUNGARREN.

Comfort her, good Rutherford ! I forgive her all that she has done against my poor child, and may God forgive her !

VIOLET.

And will nothing, dear Madam, remove from your mind that miserable notion, that I have practised witchcraft against the health and life of your child ? Can you believe this and pity me ? No, no ! were I the fiend-possessed wretch you suppose me to be, a natural antipathy would rise in your breast at the sight of me, making all touch of sympathy impossible. I am innocent of this, and of all great crime ; and you will know it, when I am laid in a dis-

honoured grave, and have passed through the fearful pass of death, from which there is no return.

LADY DUNGARREN.

You make me tremble, Violet Murrey : if you are innocent, who can be guilty ?

VIOLET.

Be it so deem'd ! it is God's will : I must be meek when such words are uttered against me. (*After a pause.*) And you think it possible that I have practised with evil powers for the torment and destruction of your child ; of poor Jessie, who was my little companion and play-fellow, whom I loved, and do love so truly ; who hung round my neck so kindly, and called me — ay, sister was a sweet word from her guileless lips, and seemed to be — (*Bursts into an agony of tears.*)

LADY DUNGARREN (*to RUTHERFORD*).

She may well weep and wring her hands : it makes me weep to think of the power of the Evil One over poor unassisted nature. Had she been less gentle and lovely, he had tempted her less strongly. I would give the best part of all that I possess to make and to prove her innocent. But it cannot be ; O no ! it cannot be !

RUTHERFORD (*to LADY DUNGARREN*).

Forbear ! forbear ! Prayer and supplication

to the throne of mercy for that grace which can change all hearts, convert misery into happiness, and set humble chastised penitence by the side of undeviating virtue, — prayer and supplication for a poor stricken sister, and for our sinful selves, is our fittest employment now.

VIOLET.

Thanks, my good Sir ; you are worthy of your sacred charge. I am, indeed, a poor stricken sister ; one of the flock given you to lead, and humbly penitent for all the sins and faults I have really committed. Pray for me, that I may be more perfectly penitent, and strengthened for the fearful trial that awaits me.

RUTHERFORD.

Thou wilt be strengthened.

VIOLET.

O ! I have great need ! I am afraid of death ; I am afraid of disgrace ; I am afraid of my own sinking pusillanimous weakness.

RUTHERFORD.

But thou need'st not be afraid, my dear child ; trust in his Almighty protection, who strengthens the weak in the hour of need, and gives nothing to destruction which in penitence and love can put its trust in Him.

VIOLET (*weeping on his shoulder*).

I will strive to do it, my kind pastor ; and the prayers of a good man will help me.

RUTHERFORD.

Let us kneel, then, in humble faith.

SHERIFF (*advancing from the bottom of the Stage*).

Not here, good Sir ; I cannot leave her here, even with a man of your cloth, and that opening for escape in the floor.

RUTHERFORD.

As you please, Sir ; remove her to another cell : or, if it must be, let a guard remain in this.

Enter an Attendant.

ATTENDANT (*to Sheriff*).

It is ready, Sir.

SHERIFF (*to VIOLET*).

You must be removed to another prison-room.

VIOLET.

As you please, Sheriff.

SHERIFF.

Lean upon me, Madam : woe the day that I should lodge so fair a lady in such unseemly chambers !

VIOLET.

I thank you for your courtesy, good She-

riff: — you do what you deem to be your duty ; and when you are at last undeceived, and convinced of my innocence, as I know you will one day be, you will be glad to remember that you did it with courtesy.

SHERIFF.

Blessing on thy lovely face, witch or no witch !
dost thou speak to me so gently !

[Exit VIOLET, leaning on the Sheriff.]

Manet Gaoler, who mutters to himself as he prepares to follow them.

GAOLER.

A bonny witch, and a cunning ane, as ever signed compact wi' Satan ! I wonder what can-trap she'll devise for the morn, whan the pinching time comes. I wish it were over.

[Exit, locking the door.]

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *A mean Chamber, with a window looking upon the Market-place of Paisley.*

Enter ANNABELLA and the Landlord of the House.

LANDLORD.

Here, Madam, you can remain concealed from every body, and see the execution distinctly from the window.

ANNABELLA.

Yes ; this is what I want. And you must let no creature come here, on any account. Keep your promise upon this point, I charge you.

LANDLORD.

Trust me, Madam, nobody shall enter this room, though they carried a bag of gold in their hand. I have refused a large sum for the use of that window ; and excepting some schoolboys and apprentices who have climbed up to the roof of the house, there is not a creature in the tenement, but Grizeld Bane and Black Bawldy, each in their place of confinement.

ANNABELLA.

I thank thee, Landlord, and will reward thee

well : thou shalt be no loser for the money thou hast refused on my account. What is the hour ?

LANDLORD.

The abbey church struck eight, as I reckon, half an hour ago.

ANNABELLA.

Longer than that — much longer. The time should be close at hand for leading out the criminals. (*Going to the window.*) What a concourse of people are assembled ! and such a deep silence through the whole !

LANDLORD.

Ay ; in the day of doom they will scarcely stand closer and quieter.

ANNABELLA.

Hold thy tongue : we know nothing of such matters.

LANDLORD.

But what the holy book reveals to us.

ANNABELLA.

Leave me, I pray thee. I would be alone. [*Landlord retires.*] Half an hour ! no half hour was ever of such a length. — Landlord ! ho ! Landlord !

Re-enter Landlord.

LANDLORD.

What is your pleasure, Madam ?

ANNABELLA.

Art thou sure that no reprieve has arrived?
It must be past the hour. (*Bell tolls.*) Ha!
the time is true.

LANDLORD.

That awful sound! It gives notice that the
prisoners will soon be led forth. Lord have
mercy on their sinful souls! on all sinful souls!

ANNABELLA.

Thou may'st go: I would be alone.

[*Exit Landlord.*

[*Bell tolls again, and at intervals through
the whole scene.*]

ANNABELLA (*alone*).

Now comes the fearful consummation! Her
arts, her allurements, her seeming beauty, her
glamour, and her power,—what will they all
amount to when the noon of this day shall be
past? a few black ashes, and a few scorched
bones.—Fye upon these cowardly thoughts,—
this sinking confidence! Revenge is sweet;
revenge is noble; revenge is natural; what price
is too dear for revenge?—Why this tormenting
commotion? To procure false evidence for the
conviction of one whom we know or believe to
be guilty,—is this a sin past redemption? No;
it is but the sacrifice of truth for right and useful
ends. I know it is; reason says it is; and I
will be firm and bold, in spite of human infirmity.

Enter GRIZELD BANE.

GRIZELD BANE.

Yes, dearest; thou art very bold. There is not a cloven foot, nor a horned head of them all, wickeder and bolder than thou art.

ANNABELLA (*shrinking back*).

What brings thee here?

GRIZELD BANE.

To be in such noble company.

ANNABELLA.

What dost thou mean by that?

GRIZELD BANE.

Every word hath its meaning, Lady, though every meaning hath not its word, as thou very well knowest. I am great; thou art great; but the greatest of all stands yonder. (*Pointing to the farther corner of the room.*)

ANNABELLA.

What dost thou point at? I see nothing.

GRIZELD BANE.

But thou wilt soon, dearest. The master we both serve is standing near us. His stature is lofty; his robe is princely; his eyes are two flames of fire. And one stands behind him, like a chieftain of elrich degree.—But why is he thus?

Can no power undo that hateful noose? It wavers before my eyes so distractingly!

ANNABELLA.

Thou art, indeed, distracted and visionary. There is nobody here but ourselves.

GRIZELD BANE.

The master of us all is waiting yonder; and he will not sink to his nether court again till the fair lady is with him.

ANNABELLA.

O! I understand thy moody fancy now. The master thou meanest is waiting for Violet Murrey.

GRIZELD BANE.

Yes, dearest, if he can get her. If not, he will have some one else, who is worthy to bear him company. He must have his meed and his mate: he will not return empty-handed, when a fair lady is to be had.

ANNABELLA.

Heaven forbend! (*The bell now sounds quicker.*) That bell sounds differently: they are now leading them forth.

GRIZELD BANE (*running to the window, and beckoning her*).

Come, come here, darling: here is a sight to

make the eyes flash, and the heart's blood stir in its core. Here is a brave sight for thee !

[They both go to the window, and the Scene closes.]

SCENE II.

The Market-place prepared for the Execution, with two Stakes, and faggots heaped round them, erected in the middle, but nearer the bottom than the front of the Stage. A great Crowd of people are discovered. The Bell tolls rapidly, and then stops.

Enter the Sheriff and Magistrates, and MARY MACMURREN, supported by a Clergyman, and guarded.

CLERGYMAN.

Now, prisoner, may God be merciful to thee ! Make use of the few moments of life that remain, by making confession before these good people of the wickedness thou hast committed, and the justice of the sentence that condemns thee. It is all the reparation now in thy power ; and may God accept it of thee !

MARY MACMURREN.

Oh, hone ! oh, hone !

CLERGYMAN.

Dost thou not understand what I say? Make confession.

MARY MACMURREN.

Oh, hone! oh, hone!

CLERGYMAN.

Dost thou hear me, woman? Make confession.

MARY MACMURREN.

Confession?

CLERGYMAN.

Yes, confession, woman.

MARY MACMURREN.

Tell me what it is, an' I'll say't.

BAILLIE.

How cunning she is to the last!

CLERGYMAN (*to MARY MACMURREN*).

Didst thou not confess on thy trial that thou wert a witch, and hadst tryste-meetings and dealings with the devil?

MARY MACMURREN.

Lord hae mercy on me : I said what I thought, and I thought as ye bade me. The Lord hae mercy on a wicked woman ! for that, I know, I am.

BAILLIE.

How cunning she is again ! She calls herself wicked, but will not call herself witch.

CLERGYMAN.

Mary Macmurren, make confession ere you die, and God will be more merciful to you.

MARY MACMURREN.

Oh, hone ! oh, hone ! miserable wretch that I am ! Do ye mak confession for me, Sir, and I'll say't after you, as weel as I dow. Oh, hone ! oh, hone !

SHERIFF (*to Clergyman*).

There is no making any thing of her now, miserable wretch ! Lead her on to the stake, and make her pray with you there, if the Evil One hath not got the entire mastery over her to the very last. (*The Clergyman leads MARY MACMURREN to the stake.*) And now there is a sadder duty to perform ; the fair, the young, and the gentle must be brought forth to shame and to punishment.

[*He goes to the gate of the prison, and returns, conducting VIOLET MURREY, who enters, leaning on the arm of RUTHERFORD.*]

SHERIFF.

Now, Madam, it is time that I should receive from you any commands you may wish to entrust me with : they shall be faithfully obeyed.

VIOLET.

I thank you, Mr. Sheriff. What may be al-

lowed for mitigating my sufferings, I know you have already ordered : have you also given similar directions in behalf of my miserable companion ?

SHERIFF.

I have, Madam.

VIOLET.

Thanks for your mercy ! My passage to a better state will be short : and of God's mercy there I have no misgivings ; for of the crime laid to my charge I am as innocent as the child newly born ; as you yourself, worthy Sir, or this good man on whose arm I now lean.

SHERIFF.

If this be so, Lady, woe to the witnesses, the judges, and the jury by whom you are condemned !

VIOLET.

Say not so. I am condemned by what honest, though erring men, believed to be the truth. What God alone knows to be the truth, is not for man's direction. — (*To RUTHERFORD.*) Weep not for me, my kind friend. You had good cause to believe that you had seen me in company with a creature not of this world, and you were compelled to declare it.

RUTHERFORD.

I wish I had died, ere that evidence had been given !

VIOLET.

Be comforted! be comforted! for you make me good amends, in that your heart refuses, in spite of such belief, to think me guilty of the crime for which I am to suffer. There is another—you know whom I mean—who thinks me innocent. When I am gone, ye will be often together, and speak and think of Violet Murrey. This is the memory I shall leave behind me: my evil fame with others is of little moment. And yet I needs must weep to think of it; 't is human weakness.

RUTHERFORD.

God bless and strengthen thee, my daughter, in this thy last extremity!

VIOLET.

Fear not for that: I am strengthened. You have prayed for me fervently, and I have prayed for myself; and think ye I shall not be supported? (*Looking round on the crowd.*) And these good people, too, some of them, I trust, will pray for me. They will one day know that I am innocent.

SEVERAL VOICES (*from the crowd, calling out in succession*).

We know it already.—She must be so.—She is innocent.

BAILLIE.

I command silence ! — Mr. Sheriff, your duty calls upon you.

SHERIFF (*to VIOLET*).

Madam. (*Turns away.*)

VIOLET.

You speak, and turn from me : I understand you.

SHERIFF.

I am compelled to say, though most unwillingly, our time is run.

VIOLET.

And I am ready. — (*Turning to RUTHERFORD.*)
The last fearful step of my unhappy course only remains : you have gone far enough, my good Sir. Receive my dying thanks for all your kindness, and let us part. Farewell ! till we meet in a better world !

RUTHERFORD.

Nay, nay ; I will be with thee till all is over, cost what it may, — though it should kill me.

VIOLET.

Most generous man ! thou art as a parent to me, and, woe the day ! thy heart will be wrung as though thou wert so in truth.

BAILLIE (*to Sheriff*).

Why so dilatory ? Proceed to the place of execution.

SHERIFF.

Not so hasty, Sir ! The psalm must first be sung.

BAILLIE.

It will be sung when she is at the stake.

SHERIFF (*aside*).

Would thou wert there in her stead, heartless bigot ! — (*Aloud.*) Raise the psalm here.

VIOLET.

You are very humane, good Sheriff, but we shall, if you please, proceed to the place appointed.

[*She is led towards the stake, when a loud cry is heard without.*]

VOICE.

Stop ! stop ! stop the execution.

Enter MURREY, darting through the crowd, who give way to let him pass.

MURREY.

She is innocent ! she is innocent ! Ye shall not murder the innocent !

SHERIFF (*to MURREY*).

Who art thou, who wouldst stop the completion of the law ?

MURREY.

One whom you have known ; whom you have looked on often.

SHERIFF.

The holy faith preserve us! art thou a living man?

RUTHERFORD.

Murrey of Torwood! doth the grave give up its dead, when the sun is shining in the sky?

SHERIFF.

Look to the lady, she is in a swoon.

MURREY (*supporting VIOLET*).

My dear, my noble child! thine own misery thou couldst sustain, but mine has overwhelmed thee: dear, dear child!

Enter DUNGARREN, running distractedly.

BAILLIE (*fronting him*).

Dungarren broke from prison, in defiance of the law!

DUNGARREN.

In defiance of all earthly things. (*Pushing the Baillie aside, and rushing on to VIOLET.*)
Who art thou? (*Looking sternly at MURREY.*)
What right hast thou to support Violet Murrey?

MURREY.

The right of a father; a miserable father.

DUNGARREN.

Her father is dead.

MURREY.

Not so, Dungarren : I would I were dead, if it could save her life.

DUNGARREN (*pointing to RUTHERFORD*).

This good man, whose word is truth itself, laid Murrey of Torwood in the grave with his own hands.

MURREY.

Did he examine the face of the corse which he so piously interred ? I had changed clothes with my faithful servant. — But it is a story tedious to tell ; and can ye doubt his claims to identity, who, in the very act of making them, subjects his own life to the forfeit of the law ?

BAILLIE (*aside to the Sheriff's officers*).

By my faith ! he is a condemned murderer, and will be required of our hands ; keep well on the watch, that he may not escape.

DUNGARREN.

She seems to revive ; she will soon recover. (*To MURREY.*) And it was you who were with her on the heath, and in the cave ?

MURREY.

It was I, Dungarren.

DUNGARREN.

No apparition, no clandestine lover, but her own father !

VIOLET (*recovering, and much alarmed*).

Call him not father ! I own him not ! Send him away, send him away, dear Robert !

MURREY (*embracing her*).

My generous child ! the strength of thy affection is wonderful, but it is all vain : I here submit myself willingly to the authority of the law, though innocent of the crime for which I am condemned — the wilful murder of a worthy gentleman. And now, Mr. Sheriff, you cannot refuse to reprieve her, who is mainly convicted for that, in being seen with me, she seemed to hold intercourse with apparitions, or beings of another world.

SHERIFF.

You speak reason : God be praised for it !

DUNGARREN.

God be praised, she is safe !

BAILLIE.

There be other proofs against her besides that.

DUNGARREN.

Be they what they may, they are false !

Enter BLACK BAWLDY, letting himself down from the wall of a low building, and running eagerly to the Sheriff.

BAWLDY.

Hear, my Lord Sheriff,—hear me, your honour

—hear me, Dungarren; —hear me, a' present!
She's innocent; —I stole it, I stole it mysel:
the Lady Annabel tempted me, and I stole it.

SHERIFF.

Simple fool! it is not for theft she is condemned.

BAWLDY.

I ken that weel, your honour. She's condemned for being a witch, and she's nae witch: I stole it mysel and gied it to the Lady Annabel, wha cuttet the hole i' the sleeve o't, I'll be sworn. Little did I think what wicked purpose she was after.

SHERIFF.

Yes, yes, my callant! I comprehend thee now: it is that gown which was produced in Court, thou art talking of. Thou stole it for the Lady Annabel, and she cut a piece out of it, which she pretended to have found in the sick-chamber?

BAWLDY.

E'en sae, your honour. Whip me, banish me, or hang me, an' it man be sae, but let the innocent leddy abee.

SHERIFF.

Well, well; I'll take the punishing of thee into my own hands, knave. What shrieks are these? [*Repeated shrieks are heard from the window of a house, and two figures are seen in-*

distinctly within, struggling : a dull stifled sound succeeds, and then a sudden silence.] There is mischief going on in that house.

BAILLIE (*running to the door of the house, and knocking*).

Let me enter : I charge you within, whoever ye be, to open the door. No answer ! (*Knocks again.*) Still no answer ! Open the door, or it shall be forced open.

GRIZELD BANE (*looking over the window*).

Ha, ha ! what want ye, good Mr. Magistrate ?

BAILLIE.

Some body has suffered violence in this house ; open the door immediately.

GRIZELD BANE.

And what would you have from the house that ye are so impatient to enter ? There be corses enow in the churchyard, I trow ; ye need not come here for them.

SHERIFF.

She is a mad woman, and has murdered somebody.

FIRST OFFICER.

Mad, your honour ! she's the witch we ha' been seeking in vain to apprehend, and the blackest, chiefest hag o' them a'.

SECOND OFFICER.

By my faith, we mun deal cannily wi' her, or she'll mak her escape fra' us again through the air.

BAILLIE (*calling up to her*).

Open the door, woman, and you sha'n't be forced ; we want to enter peaceably. Who is with you, there ? Who was it that shrieked so fearfully ?

GRIZELD BANE.

Never trouble thy head about that, Mr. Magistrate ; she'll never disturb you more.

SHERIFF.

Who is it you have with you ?

GRIZELD BANE (*throwing down to them the scarf of ANNABELLA*).

Know ye that token ? It was a fair lady who owned it, but she has no need of it now : hand me up a winding sheet.

SHERIFF.

The cursed hag has destroyed some lady. — Officers, enter by force, and do your duty. Witch or no witch, she cannot injure strong men like you, in the open light of day.

[*The door is burst open, and the Officers go into the house, and presently re-enter, bearing the dead body of ANNABELLA, which they place on the front of the Stage, the crowd gathering round to stare at it.*]

BAILLIE.

Stand back, every one of you, and leave clear room round the body. It is the Lady Annabella. She has been strangled :—she has struggled fearfully ; her features are swollen, and her eyes starting from her head ; she has struggled fearfully. — Stand back, I say ; retire to your places, every one of you, or I'll deal with you as breakers of the peace.

SHERIFF.

Be not so angry with them, good Baillie : they must have some frightful sight to stare at, and they will be disappointed of that which they came for.

BAILLIE.

Disappointed, sheriff ! You do not mean, I hope, to reprieve that foul witch at the other stake : is not one execution enough for them ? It makes me sick to see such blood-thirsting in a Christian land.

SHERIFF.

Ay, you say true ; that poor wretch had gone out of my head.

BAILLIE.

Wretch enough, good sooth ! the blackest witch in Renfrewshire, Grizeld Bane excepted.

SHERIFF.

But we need not burn her now : her evidence may be wanted to convict the other.

BAILLIE.

Not a whit ! we have evidence at command to burn her twenty times over. A bird in hand is a wise proverb. If we spare her now, she may be in Norway or Lapland when we want her again for the stake.

DUNGARREN (*approaching the body of ANNA-BELLA*).

And this is thy fearful end, most miserable woman ! It wrings my heart to think of what thou wert, and what thou mightst have been.

MURREY (*to Sheriff*).

Your authority having, on these undoubted proofs of her innocence, reprieved her, may I request that she be now withdrawn from the public gaze ? It is not fit that she should be further exposed.

SHERIFF.

True, Torwood ; you shall lead her back to prison, where she shall only remain till safe and commodious apartments are prepared for her. As for yourself, I am sorry to say, we have no power to lodge you otherwise than as a condemned man, obnoxious to the last punishment of the law.

VIOLET.

O say not so, dear Sir! He had made his escape, he was safe, he was free, and he surrendered himself into your hands to save the life of his child. Will ye take advantage of that? it were cruel and ungenerous.

SHERIFF.

We act, lady, under authority, and must not be guided by private opinions and affections.

BAILLIE.

Most assuredly! it is our duty to obey the law and to make it be obeyed, without fear or favour.

VIOLET.

On my knees, I beseech you! (*Kneeling and catching hold of the Baillie and Sheriff.*) I beseech you for an innocent man! Royal mercy may be obtained if ye will grant the time—time to save the life of the innocent—innocent, I mean, of intentional murder.

SHERIFF.

Has he further proof of such innocence to produce than was shown on his trial?

BAILLIE.

If he has not, all application for mercy were vain. He slew the man with whom he had a quarrel, without witnesses. If he is innocent, it

is to God and his own conscience, but the law must deem him guilty.

VIOLET.

He did it not without witnesses, but he who was present is dead. Alas, alas! if Fatheringham had been alive, he had been justified.

BAILLIE.

Forbear to urge that plea, lady: that the only person who was present at the quarrel or combat is dead or disappeared, throws a greater shade of darkness on the transaction.

SHERIFF.

These are hard words, Baillie, and unnecessary.

BAILLIE.

You may think so, Sheriff, but if you yield on this point, I entirely dissent from it; ay, from granting any delay to the execution of his sentence. Shall a man be made gainer for having defied the law and broken from his prison?

SHERIFF (*to MURREY sorrowfully*).

I am afraid we can do nothing for you. You must prepare for the worst.

MURREY.

I came here so prepared, worthy Sir: I knew you could do nothing for me. (*To VIOLET, who again kneels imploringly*). Forbear, dearest

child! thou humblest thyself in vain. I will meet fate as a man: do not add to my suffering by giving way to such frantic humiliation. (*Raising her from the ground.*) Dungarren, I commit her to your protection. You will be her honourable friend.

DUNGARREN.

Ay, and her devoted husband, also, if you esteem me worthy to be so.

MURREY.

Worthy to be her husband, were she the daughter of a king, my noble Robert Kennedy. But thou must not be the son-in-law of such a one as I am, —one whose life has been terminated by —

DUNGARREN.

I despise the prejudice!

VIOLET.

But I do not! O! I cannot despise it! If my father must suffer, I will never marry thee, and I will never marry another.— My fate is sealed. Thou and this good man (*pointing to RUTHERFORD*) will be my friends, and Heaven will, in pity, make my earthly course a short one. A creature so stricken with sorrow and disgrace has nothing to do in this world but to wait, in humble patience, till God in his mercy takes her out of it.

MURREY.

Come from this hateful spot, my sweet child !
Cruel as our lot is, we shall be, for what remains
of this day, together.

(Endeavours to lead her out, but is prevented by the crowd, who gather close on the front of the Stage, as GRIZELD BANE issues with frantic gestures from the house.)

VOICES *(from the crowd in succession)*.

Ay, there she comes, and the deel raging within
her. — The blackest witch of a'. — Let her be
brunt at the stake that was meant for the leddy.
— Hurra ! hurra ! mair faggots and a fiercer fire
for Grizeld ! — Hurra ! and defiance to Satan
and his agents !

[A trumpet sounds without, and the tumult increases, till a company of Soldiers appears under arms, and enter an Officer, accompanied by FATHERINGHAM.]

OFFICER *(giving a paper to the Sheriff)*.

You will please, Mr. Sheriff, to make the contents of this paper public.

SHERIFF.

I charge every one here, at his peril, to be
silent. *(Reading.)*

“Be it known unto all men, that the King’s
Majesty, with the Lords and Commons in Parlia-

ment assembled, have decreed that the law punishing what has been called the crime of witchcraft as a felonious offence be repealed ; and it is therefore repealed accordingly. Henceforth there shall no person be prosecuted at law as a wizard or witch, throughout these realms ; and any person or persons who shall offer injury to any one, as being guilty of the supposed crime of witchcraft, shall be punished for such aggression. God save the King ! ”

[A pause of dead silence, followed by low, then loud murmurs, and then voices call out in succession.]

VOICES.

My certes ! the dee has been better represented in the house of Parliament than a' the braid shires in the kingdom. — Sic a decree as that in a Christian land ! — To mak Satan triumphant ! — There 'll be fine gambols on moors and in kirkyards for this, I trow. — Parliament, forsooth ! we hae sent bonnie members there, indeed, gin thae be the laws they mak. — And will Mary Macmurren escape after a' ? — Out upon 't ! She may be brunt at ony rate, for she is condemned by the gude auld law of our forefathers. — Ay, so she may ; that stands to reason.

[Crowd close round the stake where MARY MACMURREN is bound.]

SHERIFF (*to the Crowd*).

Desist, I say, or the soldiers shall disperse you forthwith.

FATHERINGHAM.

Would they burn the miserable creature for an imaginary crime ; one may say, for a pastime !

BAILLIE (*to FATHERINGHAM*).

No, good Sir ; not imaginary. She is a witch by her own confession. And that woman (*pointing to GRIZELD BANE*) is also, by her own words, convicted of consorting and colleaguings with Satan, — an awful and mischievous witch.

FATHERINGHAM.

Is she so ?

GRIZELD BANE (*looking at him fiercely*).

Who says otherwise ? The sun shines now, and that makes thee bold ; but my time of power is coming.

FATHERINGHAM (*approaching her*).

Is this you, Grizeld Bane ? What brought you to this part of the country ?

GRIZELD BANE.

The prince of the power of the air.

BAILLIE.

There, Sir ! you hear her confess it. And who is she ? for you seem to know her.

FATHERINGHAM.

A miserable woman whose husband was hanged

for murder, at Inverness, some years ago, and who thereupon became distracted. She was, when I left that country, kept in close custody. But she has, no doubt, escaped from her keepers, who may not be very anxious to reclaim her.

BAILLIE.

We must secure her, then, and send her back to the north.

GRIZELD BANE.

Lay hands on me who dare ! I defy you : my master is stronger than you all, since you sent him to his kingdom of darkness. Ye cannot stop the breath of a spirit, though you had a score of executioners at your beck. Lay hands upon me who dare !

FATHERINGHAM.

Nobody will do you any violence, Dame ; but you will quietly retire with these two friends of yours (*motioning significantly to two Soldiers, who advance and take charge of her*). Nay ; make no resistance : look steadfastly in my face, and you will plainly perceive that you must go.

(Fixes his eyes upon her sternly, while she suffers herself to be led off.)

OFFICER.

Now, Mr. Sheriff, release your prisoners, since the laws against witchcraft are abrogated.

SHERIFF.

I do it most gladly. Would you had authority to command the release of all my prisoners.

OFFICER.

It is only those condemned for witchcraft, whose enlargement I have authority to command.

MURREY (*stepping sternly from the opposite side of the Stage, and fronting FATHERINGHAM closely*).

But there is a prisoner condemned for murder whom thou, James Fatheringham, knowest to be innocent, and therefore thou art by nature authorised, yea, compelled, to demand his release, — I mean, the reversion of his sentence.

FATHERINGHAM (*starting back*).

Murrey of Torwood in the land of the living!

MURREY.

No thanks to thee that I am so! To desert me, and leave the country too, circumstanced as thou knewest me to be, — the only witness of that fatal quarrel, — was it the act of a friend, of a Christian, of a man?

FATHERINGHAM.

No, neither of a Christian, nor a heathen, had it been a voluntary act. But you were not yet in custody, when I left the country, with no intention of going further than the southern coast of Ireland, to visit a dying relation.

MURREY.

In Ireland all these years?

FATHERINGHAM.

Be not so hasty. That coast I never reached: a violent storm drove our vessel out to sea, where she was boarded and captured by a pirate. My varied tale, dear Murrey, you shall hear on a fitter occasion. Thank God that I am now here! and have this day accompanied my friend (*pointing to the Officer*) on his public errand, still in time to save thee. For hearing, on my return to England, some weeks ago, thy sad story, how thou hadst been condemned, hadst made thy escape from prison, how thy dead body was found in a pit, and interred, — I was in no hurry to proceed northwards, as the justification of thy memory could not be disappointed.

MURREY.

Thou shouldst not have suffered even my memory to rest under such imputation, — no, not an hour.

VIOLET.

Dear father, be not so stern when deliverance, — a blessed deliverance, — is sent to thee. See; there is a tear in his eye. It was not want of friendship that detained him.

FATHERINGHAM.

I thank thee, sweet lady, for taking my part.

It was not want of friendship that detained me ; though Murrey has always been so hasty and ardent, and I so deliberate and procrastinating, it is wonderful we should ever have been friends.

DUNGARREN.

No, not wonderful : though slow yourself, you loved him, perhaps, for his ardour.

FATHERINGHAM.

Yes, young man, you are right. But how was it that he loved me ? if, indeed, he ever loved me. Perhaps he never did.

MURREY (*rushing into his arms*).

I did—I do—and will ever love thee, wert thou as slow and inert as a beetle.

DUNGARREN.

Now ye are friends, and this terrible tempest has past over us ! May such scenes as we have this day witnessed never again disgrace a free and a Christian land !

[*A murmur amongst the Crowd.*]

SHERIFF.

Good people, be pacified ; and instead of the burning of a witch, ye shall have six hogsheads of ale set abroach at the cross, to drink the health of Violet Murrey, and a grand funeral into the bargain.

DUNGARREN.

Forbear, Sheriff: the body of this unhappy lady is no subject for pageantry. She shall be interred with decent privacy; and those who have felt the tyranny of uncontrolled passions will think, with conscious awe, of her end.

[The Curtain drops.]

THE
HOMICIDE:
A TRAGEDY IN PROSE,
WITH OCCASIONAL PASSAGES OF VERSE.
IN THREE ACTS.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

CLAUDIEN, *a Danish Nobleman.*

VAN MAURICE, *his Friend.*

BARON HARTMAN, *a near Relation of Van Maurice.*

KRANZBERG, *a Citizen of Lubeck, related to Van Maurice and Hartman.*

ARDUSOFFE, } *Advocates.*

BORION,

CORMAN, *Confidential Servant to Kranzberg.*

Judges, Confessors, Officers of Justice, Mariners, &c. &c.

WOMEN.

ROSELLA, *Sister to Van Maurice.*

MARGARET, *her confidential and domestic Friend.*

Scene, the free Imperial City of Lubeck, and at Sea.

THE HOMICIDE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Ante-chamber in the House of*
VAN MAURICE.

Enter BARON HARTMAN *and* MARGARET, *by*
different sides.

HARTMAN.

Good morning, fair Margaret! I come to have the felicity of half an hour's conversation with Rosella. I hope this will prove to her, as well as myself, the most agreeable way of receiving an answer to the billet which I had the honour to send her this morning.

MARGARET.

Indeed, honoured Sir, she is in no spirits to receive company at present, and wishes to be alone.

HARTMAN.

Ha! she is considering of it then. It is indeed a serious consideration; but after the favour—I may indeed call it so—the condescension

at least with which she has received my devoted attentions, I might fairly have supposed that a short time would have sufficed for the ceremony of consideration.

MARGARET.

I believe, Baron, that ceremony, as you are pleased to term it, has been gone through already. At least, I believe, this billet which she desired me to put into your own hands, along with this case of jewels, will convince you that further consideration were needless. I was just going to your house to deliver them to you.

HARTMAN.

What does she mean? return my present!

MARGARET.

The letter will, no doubt, explain it.

HARTMAN (*snatches the letter, opens it with agitation, reading it half aloud and half to himself*).

“Only friendship to return for all.—Pleasure in your society as a neighbour and a kinsman.—Beg of you to accept my grateful acknowledgments.” What is all this? Would she prolong the fooling of attendance another half year? Let her beware how she sports with devoted affection like mine. (*Walks to and fro somewhat disturbed, then returns to MARGARET.*) I understand all this well enough. Let me find her in her own apartment.

MARGARET (*preventing him as he endeavours to pass on*).

Nay, Sir, you must not.

HARTMAN.

Foolish girl! I know thy fair friend better than thou dost. Let me pass to her apartment, and I'll soon make her glowing lips contradict the cold words of her letter.

MARGARET.

Indeed, Baron Hartman, you must not pass.

HARTMAN.

Why so? Nonsensical mummary!

MARGARET.

She wishes to be alone.

HARTMAN.

Alone! wishes to be alone! that is not her usual inclination. What is the matter?

MARGARET.

She is indisposed, and can see no one. And I must take the liberty to say that you are deluding yourself when you mistake that cheerful gaiety of her manner, which is natural to her, for a proof of partiality to your company.

HARTMAN.

If what you say be true, young mistress, — if this answer of hers be a serious one, I have not deluded myself, but she has deluded me.

MARGARET.

Then every pleasant man of her acquaintance might say the same thing, for she is cheerful and affable with them all.

HARTMAN.

No, madam ; affable and cheerful as you please, but she has not demeaned herself towards them as she has done towards me : and I will know the cause why I am so treated, before another hour passes over my head. (*Going.*)

MARGARET.

But you will be pleased to take this with you, Baron. (*Offering him the case of jewels, which he casts from him indignantly.*)

HARTMAN.

Let any jilt in Lubeck wear the paltry baubles for me. [*Exit.*]

MARGARET (*alone*).

The vanity of that man is unconquerable ; and yet I cannot help pitying him a little ; for Rossella, to conceal her betrothment to Claudien, has amused herself with his folly too long. (*Picking up the case.*) I must keep these rich jewels carefully, however, and restore them to him at a more favourable moment. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

The Apartment of ROSELLA. She is discovered sitting by a table writing, and CLAUDIEN standing behind her chair, overlooking her as she writes.

CLAUDIEN.

That pretty hand, and those fair characters
So delicate ! they should alone express
Words of a sweet and sisterly affection, —
Words of the dearer tenderness of love.
Have done with cold notes of formality ;
Let Marg'ret henceforth write such things as
those.

(Lifting her hand from the paper and caressing it.)

No, this white hand, this soft, this delicate
hand,

As delicate as if the early dew
Dropp'd from the lily's bell or hawthorn's blossom,

A fresh collection of all summer sweetness,
Had been its daily unguent, it is mine ;
Thou' st given it to me ; ay, and it shall write
To me, to me alone, when I am gone.

ROSELLA.

A wise precaution, mask'd with seeming love.
When I shall think of nobody but thee,
I might, perhaps, betray our secret bond,
Beginning thus to some old gouty kinsman
A dull epistle — “ My dear Claudien.”

CLAUDIEN.

Alas, that secret, that constraining secret !
It is a galling weight about our necks,
Would we were rid of it !

ROSELLA.

But when the king of Denmark, thy good master,
Shall know how thou art circumstanced, he
surely
Will not enforce upon thee an alliance
Unsought by thee, now thought of with repug-
nance,
Because he did at first, on thy behalf,
Propose it to the parent of the maid, —
A maid thou'st scarcely seen, and never woo'd ?

CLAUDIEN.

I trust he will not, and should lose no time
In reaching Copenhagen ere the court
Remove to Elsinour, that speedily
I may return to thee, my sweet Rosella,
A free and happy man.

ROSELLA.

A free man, say'st thou, Claudien ?

CLAUDIEN.

Yes, gentle mistress, for the bonds of love
Are very freedom, or are something better.
Still, to protect thee from all harm, to be
Near to thee always ; sit by thee unhidden—
Read to thee pleasant tales — look in thy face,
And, all thy smiles and meaning glances scanning,
To do what they desire — will this be thralldom ?
Will this be servitude ?

ROSELLA.

Ah, no ! that is not servitude from which,
When tired of it, thou wilt break loose, my friend.

CLAUDIEN.

And so I will, my love, when thou art tiresome,
But when will that be ; say ?

ROSELLA.

E'en when thou see'st what thou may'st shortly
find,
A face to gaze on, fairer than Rosella's.

CLAUDIEN.

Be not offended ; such a one already
I've seen, and yet the latchet of thy shoe
I'd rather tie and have one smile of thanks,
Than press a score of kisses on her lips.

ROSELLA.

She may be also wittier than me.

CLAUDIEN.

And pardon me again ; that may be possible ;
Yet would I rather hear thy cheerful voice
Bidding me a good morrow, faith and truth !
Than all her wit and wisdom, were she learn'd
As Gottenburgh professor.

ROSELLA.

Fy on thee, Claudien ! Would'st thou then
insinuate
That I am not thy reasonable choice,
But one that has been fasten'd on thy fancy
By spells of witchcraft ?

CLAUDIEN.

Thou hast it, love ; by very spells of witchcraft ;
For how could that be reasonable choice
Which no deliberation knew. Thy countenance,
Such as it is — thy joyous playful countenance,
I look'd upon, and look'd upon again,
Till I became a fascinated thing,
As helpless as an infant.

ROSELLA.

Alas, poor child ! this was a sudden change.

CLAUDIEN.

Nay, I am wrong ; it was not quite so sudden ;
For after I had seen thy face, I waited —
Waited with eager ears to hear thy voice,
And then I watch'd thee to observe thy move-
ments,

Light step and graceful gesture — then I waited
To hear thy voice again, and then —

ROSELLA.

I pray thee
Have done with such a foolish list of *thens* !
Dost thou forget thou hast already won me ?
I'll have thee presently, I do suppose,
Repeating all thy courtship o'er again,
And kneeling at my feet for perfect idleness.

CLAUDIEN.

And so thou shalt, were't only for the pleasure
Of being raised again by that white hand.
(*Kneeling to her playfully.*)

ROSELLA (*laying her hand upon his head*).

It will not raise thee up, thou saucy mimic !
But keep thee down, for this thy mock humility,
Which is but vanity in cloak and vizard ;
The bearing of success without misgiving
Or fear of change ; the full security
Of an affianced lord.

Enter BARON HARTMAN *behind*.

CLAUDIEN.

To keep me down,
Whilst thy soft fingers, mixing with my hair,
Gives thrilling so delightful ! on such terms,
I'd gladly at thy feet kneel by the hour,
So to be mortified —

HARTMAN (*rushing forward*).

Oh, woman, woman!

[CLAUDIEN *starts up from the feet of his Mistress, and both seem surprised and embarrassed.*]

ROSELLA.

Baron Hartman here!

HARTMAN.

Yes, madam; and, as I perceive, not altogether welcome.

ROSELLA.

In this place and at this hour, Baron!

HARTMAN.

An injured man, madam, regards not time or place. As a near kinsman, had there been no other plea, I might have been admitted for one half hour into your presence, to know the cause why, after such long and well-received attentions, I am now to be discarded from your favour. But this, forsooth, could not be: you were indisposed; you were alone, and wished to be alone. I have, no doubt, grievously offended in breaking thus upon the privacy of one who loves so very much to be alone.

CLAUDIEN.

Truly, Baron, I have, like yourself, come unbidden into this lady's presence, and have cast myself at her feet, as you have witnessed; for

which humiliation she has only rewarded me with mocking: had you done the same, Baron, you would, perhaps, have fared no better.

HARTMAN.

Count Claudien, the freedom of a careless stranger may be some excuse for your intrusion here, but can be none for her excluding me on pretences so frivolous; for the alleged indisposition is, I perceive, only the being indisposed for *my* company, who am an old and faithful friend; ay, and her kinsman to boot.

CLAUDIEN.

My noble baron, you and I are rivals, and rest our pretensions here on very different foundations; you on being known to the lady, I on the reverse. But I am the wiser of the two.

HARTMAN.

How so, I pray?

CLAUDIEN.

Is it not a notorious fact, that strangers of any apparent likelihood always occupy the vantage ground in every woman's favour? Had the fair Rosella known me as long as she has known you, she might have discovered in me as many faults, perhaps, as would have excluded me from the very threshold of her vestibule.

ROSELLA.

So you see, my dear cousin, that the wisest

thing you can do, is to leave the count and me time enough to discover how foolish we both are.

HARTMAN.

The wisest thing I can do, madam, is to forget and despise the heartless caprice of a fickle, fantastical beauty.

ROSELLA.

Be wise, then, good cousin, since you have found out the way.

HARTMAN.

Heartless woman! canst thou treat with such levity the misery thou hast occasioned?

ROSELLA.

O pardon me, my dear Hartman! thou takest this matter more deeply than I dreamt of. Think not so severely of me; if I have erred, lend me of thine own generosity some further credit on thy good opinion, and I will redeem it. Have you not always known me as your gay and thoughtless cousin? and why will you tax me now as a grave and prudent dame? Come to me to-morrow; I shall then have seen my brother, and will talk to you seriously on a subject which to-day I would avoid.

HARTMAN.

At what hour shall I meet you?

ROSELLA.

Not at an early hour.—At noon.—No, not so soon.—In the afternoon—in the evening : that will suit me best.

HARTMAN.

Well, since it must be deferred so long, let the evening be the time. But remember, madam, I will submit no longer to be the sport of female caprice. If this gay stranger takes such treatment more lightly, he is of a different temperament, perhaps, and it may agree with him ; but it will not pass with Baron Hartman.

[Exit, proudly.]

CLAUDIEN.

My dear Rosella ! I fear thou hast been leading on this poor man in a fool's chase. I pity him.

ROSELLA.

I fear I have, and do repent me of it.

CLAUDIEN.

It was but the foible of thy gay and thoughtless nature.

ROSELLA.

Ah no ! I fear I have not that excuse.

CLAUDIEN.

Intentional deceit !

ROSELLA.

Dearest Claudien ! kill me not with that word and that look ! It was to conceal my connection with thee, that I have of late received the gallantries of Hartman with more than usual graciousness ; but it was to deceive the world rather than himself. Fool that I was !

CLAUDIEN.

Yes, it was foolish.

ROSELLA.

But though I might have guessed that his inordinate vanity would construe my behaviour into downright love of his fine form and mental endowments, I never imagined he would feel more pain in the disappointment than a little wounded vanity might inflict, nor am I sure that he really feels more deeply.

CLAUDIEN.

I fear thou dost him wrong. I pity him from my heart ; and were it possible for me to chide what is so dear, I should inflict upon thee, at this moment, words of grave rebuke.

ROSELLA.

Nay, not now, dear Claudien ! reserve them till thy return, for then I shall be so happy that they will sound in my ear like harmony. I cannot bear them now. (*Weeping.*)

CLAUDIEN.

Nay, nay, mistress of my soul ! I meant not to distress thee so much. Those tears are a greater punishment to me than I can bear. And let me wipe them off,—kiss them off. Thou shalt never shed tears again for Claudien's sternness.

Enter MARGARET.

ROSELLA.

What is the matter ?

MARGARET.

Nothing ; I am only come to inform the Count that the master of the vessel is below, and wishes to know his will concerning the removal of his luggage.

CLAUDIEN.

Ha ! very true ; I should have waited for him at home, and it slipt from my memory entirely. Keep thee from being in love, fair Margaret, it makes one's head not worth a maravedi.

MARGARET.

But the heart finds what the head loses, and where is the waste ?

CLAUDIEN.

True, girl ; and be pleasant and amusing to thy friend here, while I am absent. [*Exit.*

ROSELLA.

My dear Margaret, didst thou see Hartman when he left the house ?

MARGARET.

Only a glimpse of him.

ROSELLA.

Did he look very miserable ?

MARGARET.

I do think he did, poor man ; but he is so vain, he will be the better for his mortification.

ROSELLA.

I thank thee, Margaret ; it does me good to hear thee say so ; for I know that thy thoughts and thy words are the same.

MARGARET.

Come along, my dear child, and I will tell thee a new story of his consummate conceit as we go : sha'n't we take our usual turn on the terrace ?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Public Garden.

Enter HARTMAN, walking backward and forward in a perturbed manner, and presently enter KRANZBERG, who stands observing him curiously before he speaks.

KRANZBERG.

Good morning, kinsman ; nothing, I hope, has happened to disturb you : I have marked you at a distance, striding along with a quick unusual pace : pardon the solicitude of friendship, if I am anxious to know what discomposes you so much.

HARTMAN.

Let it pass, let it pass ! I know my place and my pretensions as well as any man ; she shall neither break my heart nor discompose me long.

KRANZBERG.

It is a woman, then, who is the cause of your agitation. What kind of woman can she be who is unfavourable to the suit of Baron Hartman ?

HARTMAN.

Thou may'st well ask that question, my friend ;
it would, I believe, cause some surprise in many
a noble citizen of Lubeck.

KRANZBERG.

In many a noble lady of Lubeck we may, at
least, aver, though strange unnatural things will
sometimes happen, as if by witchery. But let
her have her way ; she will be glad enough at
last to bring you back to her toils again by hum-
ble submission, if you will have spirit enough to
forswear her company for a time.

HARTMAN.

A time !

KRANZBERG.

Ay, some weeks or so.

HARTMAN.

Perhaps thou art right. I had good reason
to believe my company was agreeable to her.
But—but ——

KRANZBERG.

Out with it, Baron ! you cannot question my
friendship or secrecy, and perhaps I may be of
use to you.

HARTMAN.

This cousin of mine ——

KRANZBERG.

What, the fair Rosella ; she is the culprit !—
I had almost guessed as much.

HARTMAN.

But thou canst not guess the excess of her
fickleness.

KRANZBERG.

I will not attempt it, for you shall tell me.

HARTMAN.

She denied me access to her presence this
very morning, on the pretence of being unwell,
and wishing to be alone ; and when I made my
entry by stealth through the private door of her
apartment, I found her engaged in playful co-
quetry with Claudien.

KRANZBERG.

I fear there is something more than play con-
cerned in this coquetry.

HARTMAN.

But she has not regarded him of late ; her
smiles were bestowed upon me.

KRANZBERG.

Deceitful smiles, to cover secret passion. Be-
lieve me, kinsman, she has only made you the
cover for her wiles ; and I am well assured, that
when he is returned from Copenhagen, where he
goes to remove some obstacle to their wishes, they

will, with the approbation of her brother Van Maurice, throw aside all disguise, and be married. He sails in the Mermaid to-morrow.

HARTMAN.

May the waves of the sea be his winding-sheet !
May the fishes of the ocean devour his lothly carcass !

KRANZBERG.

It may, indeed, be lothly enough when it falls to their share, but for his living carcass, at least, you must own that is noble and goodly.

HARTMAN.

I own it not : to me there is something in his air, his form, his mien, in the glance of his eye, yea, in the garb which he wears, that is intolerable.

KRANZBERG.

The ladies of Lubeck think differently.

HARTMAN.

Let them think as they will ! it makes me mad to hear of such stupid, such perverse, such blind partiality. Senseless, fickle fools !

KRANZBERG.

True, they are fickle enough ; but never mind it, that will cure the evil. They will praise him for an Apollo till he marry Rosella, and abuse him for a scarecrow afterwards.

HARTMAN.

Marry Rosella! I will have the heart's blood from his body ere I endure this misery for one day longer.

KRANZBERG.

Fy, fy, good Baron! I am very sorry I have said so much to you on this subject; but the friendly,—I may truly say, affectionate regard I feel for you, besides the admiration I have long entertained for your merits, made me unable to conceal from you longer the unworthy deceit which has been practised upon you. When I saw her smile upon you, and glance secret looks of fondness to Claudien, ——

HARTMAN.

Say no more of it; my very ears are ringing with the sound. I will have vengeance ere another day pass over my head.

[*Exit furiously.*

KRANZBERG (*alone*).

Let the fool work upon this! it will embroil him at least with Van Maurice and his sister, and I shall have the management of himself and his fortune in my own hands. (*In a calculating posture, after having taken a turn across the Stage, muttering to himself.*) Well, two thousand good acres, corn-land and forest, though encumbered with the due maintenance of the proprietor, may be as profitable to me as a third part of the fee-

simple. What idiots they are who put their throats in jeopardy of the hangman, to have the actual property of money, when without risk or trouble they may have the actual spending thereof! — O there is nothing one may not procure, when one is happy enough to have a rich fool for one's friend — one's very dear, noble, feeling, high-minded friend! To soil one's hands with crime but for a little more than one can safely wheedle from him; it is the act of a hot-headed idiot! [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Library, with globes, cabinets, and other furniture, denoting the apartment of a student; a Table in front, on which burns a Lamp, the back of the Stage being entirely in shade.

Enter CLAUDIEN by a concealed door at the bottom of the Stage, who walks once or twice across it in a distracted manner, and then leaning his back against the wall, continues motionless.

Enter VAN MAURICE by the front, with a book in his hand, which he lays upon the table.

VAN MAURICE (*after having turned over the leaves for some time*).

It is very strange; the passage opened to my

hand in this very book but the other day, and now it is nowhere to be found. (*A heavy sigh is uttered by CLAUDIEN.*) I thought I heard something. (*Looking round.*) It is fancy. (*Turning over the leaves again.*) I will not give up the search; it was certainly here, and it will bear me out in every thing I have advanced on the subject. (*A deep sigh, uttered as before.*) There is somebody near me. (*Looking round the room more perfectly, and discovering CLAUDIEN.*) Who art thou, lurking yonder in the shade? Come forward to the light, be thy designs hostile or friendly. Speak; say who thou art?

CLAUDIEN (*advancing*).

Thy friend.

VAN MAURICE.

My friend, here at this hour in such a plight!
What is the matter, Claudien? what has happened?

CLAUDIEN.

Something has happen'd!—I will tell thee all
When I am able.

VAN MAURICE.

Thou'rt deadly pale; thy face is strangely haggard.
Sit down, sit down; thou art too weak to stand.

CLAUDIEN (*sinking, half supported by VAN MAURICE, into a chair*).

The light bewilders me.

VAN MAURICE.

There's fever on thee ; let me feel thy hand.
Ha ! there is blood upon it ; thou art wounded ;
Thou'rt faint and need'st assistance. (*Going.*)

CLAUDIEN (*preventing him*).

Call no one here, but stay with me thyself.
'Tis not my own blood, Maurice ; would it
were !

VAN MAURICE.

Hast thou slain any one ?

CLAUDIEN.

He did attack me ; from his hand I wrested
The clenched dagger — plunged it in his breast.

VAN MAURICE.

Then God be praised thou hast escaped, dear
Claudien !

CLAUDIEN.

Oh say not so ! I've taken human life,
I've sent a sinful soul to its dread reck'ning.

VAN MAURICE.

Be not so overcome ; there is no cause.
His death is thy deliv'rance ; and the laws
Of God and man will fully justify
An act of self-defence.

CLAUDIEN.

But me they will not justify ! Beneath me —
My knee upon his breast. (*Starting from his
seat with a gesture of despair.*) — Oh !
what availed

The poor offence of a few spiteful words,
That I should do a fell — a ruffian's deed !

VAN MAURICE.

Be patient, Claudien, nor against thyself
Speak with such vehemence of condemnation.
Hadst thou resisted provocation, surely
It had been well. Thou 'st done a fearful deed,
But 't was a reckless, instantaneous impulse.

CLAUDIEN.

No, no ! Oh, no ! there was a fearful moment,
And thoughts cross'd o'er my mind before I
struck him.

Would it had been an instantaneous impulse !

VAN MAURICE.

Distress of mind obscures thine understanding.

CLAUDIEN.

I 've loved and been beloved by worthy men ;
A noble, gen'rous heart dwelt in my breast,
As they believed, and so, alas, did I.
But Providence has brought it to the proof ;
It was a fiend's heart ; not a noble one.
Maurice, Van Maurice, when upon thy shoulder

Haste to the garden-gate, — go to thy lodgings,
Thou wert at any rate to sail to-morrow
For Copenhagen by the early tide ;
Thy quitting Lubeck will not raise suspicion.
Take leave, then, of Rosella, at the hour
When she expects thee, as if nought gave pain
But leaving her. Go home, all will go well.

(Knocking at the door.)

Dost thou not hear? art spell-bound to the spot?
Go home immediately. *(Leads him hastily to
the private door, and pushes him gently
away.)* [Exit CLAUDIEN.

*[The knocking repeated still louder without:
VAN MAURICE returns to the opposite side
and unlocks the door.]*

Enter KRANZBERG and two Officers of Justice.

KRANZBERG.

How intent you have been on your studies,
good Baron! to let us knock so long at your
door!

VAN MAURICE.

I expected no visitors at this hour.

KRANZBERG.

Visitors will come at all hours when matters
of moment compel them. I have that to tell
you of which it concerns you much to know. —

But you look as if you knew it already, for your face is as white as your neckcloth.

VAN MAURICE.

I know not what you mean ; but I expect to hear something very dreadful from the alarm of your manner. What concern have I in your tale ? which you had better tell me quickly in as few words as may be. What has happened ?

KRANZBERG.

Your cousin, Baron Hartman, is murdered ; the body has been found in a field, under the northern rampart.

VAN MAURICE.

Are you sure he is dead ? The dagger, perhaps, has not gone so deep as you imagine ; and he may but have fainted from loss of blood.

FIRST OFFICER (*stepping eagerly up to VAN MAURICE*).

And how do you know, Sir, that it is a dagger which has given the wound ?

VAN MAURICE (*in confusion*).

I guess — I suppose — it is the common weapon of an assassin.

SECOND OFFICER (*aside to KRANZBERG*).

Did you mark that ? I have my suspicions.

KRANZBERG (*after a pause, during which they all look on VAN MAURICE and on one another significantly*).

But you give us no orders, Van Maurice? You are his nearest kinsman : it belongs to you to act on this unhappy occasion.

[*Whilst they are speaking, First Officer goes round the room, looking into every corner, and at last stoops and lifts something from the floor, at the bottom of the Stage.*]

VAN MAURICE.

Yes, true ; something should be done. Let the body be removed to his house, and try if it can possibly be recovered.

KRANZBERG.

That has been done already, and it is as dead as the corpse of your grandfather. Are these all the orders you have to give? Sha'n't we send an armed party through the country to track out the murderer?

FIRST OFFICER (*advancing*).

We need not track him far. (*Holding up the dagger.*) Here is his mark : and, Baron Van Maurice, I arrest thee in the name of the state. (*Laying hold of him.*)

VAN MAURICE (*repelling him*).

Lay no hands on me, or ye may dearly answer for such an outrage. I am most innocent of the

crime with which you would charge me ; though I may well look disturbed on hearing such terrible intelligence.

KRANZBERG.

Ay, so thou may'st ; but there is more than looks to condemn thee. (*Showing him the dagger, upon which he recoils some paces back, and seems confounded.*) Does this appal thee ? We arrest thee in the name of the state, and this shall be our witness that we have not acted rashly.

[*They all endeavour to seize him, while he struggles with them ; and then enter several Servants.*]

FIRST SERVANT.

Lay hands on our master ! Ye shall take our lives, hell-hounds, ere ye wrong one hair of his head.

FIRST OFFICER.

We arrest him in the name of the state, and he is our lawful prisoner.

FIRST SERVANT (*showing a pistol*).

And I will blow your brains out in my own name, if ye do not let him go i' the instant.

[*More armed Servants rushing in, surround KRANZBERG and the Officers, and rescue VAN MAURICE.*]

VAN MAURICE (*recovering his composure*).

Ye see I am freed from your grasp, and ye are now prisoners in this house during my pleasure.

All the Servants, speaking at once.

Yes, noble Baron ; give them to our charge, and we will keep them securely, I warrant you.

VAN MAURICE (*to the Servants*).

I thank you, my friends ; but I have somewhat more to say to these gentlemen. Ye see that I might detain you here, as long as my own convenience or safety, granting I were guilty, might require it ; but I release you freely, upon this condition, that I shall remain at liberty, unmolested, till to-morrow mid-day ; after that hour, I bind myself, as a man of honour, to be found here in my own house, ready without resistance to obey the laws of my country.

FIRST OFFICER.

Spoken like a man of honour, and we will trust you.

VAN MAURICE (*to KRANZBERG*).

And you promise this ? (*To Second Officer.*)
And you.

KRANZBERG *and* SECOND OFFICER (*both at once*).

We do.

VAN MAURICE (*to Servants*).

Let these gentlemen retire freely when it is

their pleasure. (*To KRANZBERG.*) Kinsman,
good night. [*Exit.*

[*KRANZBERG and Officers remain on the front,
whilst the Servants retire to the bottom of the
Stage.*]

FIRST OFFICER (*to KRANZBERG*).

Had we not better go hence and return by
and by with a guard to hover, concealed round
the house, and watch his motions? He may make
his escape else, for all his fair promises.

KRANZBERG.

Let him do so; if he fly the country he is
outlawed, and that will serve the purpose as
effectually.

FIRST OFFICER.

Purpose! is there any other purpose but the
vindication of the law, which says, "He who
sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood
be shed."

[*KRANZBERG turns away in confusion, and
pretends to speak to the Servants at the
bottom of the Stage.*]

SECOND OFFICER.

What! man, dost thou not understand him?

FIRST OFFICER.

No, faith! and thy wit is sharper than I reckon
for if thou dost.

SECOND OFFICER.

Yet the mystery is not very deep neither. The Baron here is heir to Baron Hartman, and Kranzberg again is next heir after him, the lands being strictly so destined ; and an outlaw, thou knowest, is a dead man as to all inheritance.

FIRST OFFICER.

Why, there's some sense in that. And by my faith ! if Van Maurice has murdered Hartman to transfer his large estate to Kranzberg, he has sold himself to the devil for a ducat.

SECOND OFFICER.

Yes ; hell will have a good bargain of it every way, for the revenues of the land will be as much spent for its interest in the possession of Kranzberg, as if given in fee simple to Beelzebub.

FIRST OFFICER.

Nay, nay ; he lives in good repute, — thou art uncharitable.

KRANZBERG (*advancing to the front*).

Come, friends ; let us return to our homes ; to-morrow, at mid-day, we meet here again.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

*The Apartment of ROSELLA ; she enters, followed
by an old Seaman, speaking as she enters.*

ROSELLA.

And the wind is fair, thou sayest, but the sky
foretelling change. Thou art an old mariner,
good Jacome, and hast skill in sky and weather ;
tell me, then, faithfully, does it forbode a storm ?

JACOME.

No, madam ; not to say a storm ; nothing to
make you or any of the friends of Count Clau-
dien uneasy : a stiff gale or so ; and that, with a
tight new vessel to trust to, is but a passing rouse
for sailors or passengers either. It only makes
a stir on board and the blood circulate more
quickly. No, no, no ! nothing to make one un-
easy.

ROSELLA.

God grant it may be so !

JACOME.

Fear not, madam, fear not ! You know I never
speak but as I think ; and I would not disgrace
my former calling now by lying like a landsman.

ROSELLA.

I hear them coming ; do what I desired thee,
quickly. *[Exit JACOME.*

Thank heaven ! the voyage is but short ; the
time

Of his return fix'd as the calendar,
If that the fickle winds will give permission.

Enter CLAUDIEN *and* VAN MAURICE.

True to the hour of taking leave, my Claudien :
Ah ! be as punctual to the promised time
Of thy return. And wilt thou not ?

CLAUDIEN.

At least,
The fault shall not be mine, if I am not.

ROSELLA.

How gravely and how solemnly thou sayest so !
Has aught befallen to make thee on this point
Less sure than thou wert yesterday ? — Dear
brother,

You spoke so lightly of our parting then,
But now your cheer is wonderfully changed.

VAN MAURICE.

Something indeed has happen'd, dear Rosella,
That may defer thy Claudien's return
For a short month or so.

ROSELLA (*after looking at them inquiringly*).

No, no, Van Maurice,
Upon your faces I do plainly read
A more distressing tale. Deceive me not :
Tell me the worst at once ; I'm his betroth'd,
And have a right to know it. Have I not ?
Have I not, gentle Claudien ?

CLAUDIEN.

Thou hast a right to every thing, my love,
That a devoted heart can give. My life,
All that deserves the name of life, I have
But in thy presence ; to be absent from thee
Longer than strict necessity compels
Would be a wanton act of self-destruction.
Trust, then, that he who is so strongly bound
Will soon return. The carrier-bird, released,
Points to one cherish'd spot her arrowy flight ;
Not air's bright insects, nor earth's alpine peaks,
With purple berries clothed, her wonted lures,
From its true line can warp it e'en so much
As the vibration of a stricken cord.

ROSELLA.

This is no answer : art thou not my own, —
Almost my husband, and here stands a brother,
And yet you deal with me in mysteries.
Fie ! is this well ? Have I deserved this wrong ?

VAN MAURICE.

Be satisfied, Rosella ; urge us not.

It is not want of confidence in thee
Which makes us so reserved ; urge no further.

ROSELLA.

Nay, but I will ; for ye conceal from me
Some recent and disastrous event
To spare me pain. But ye mistake your aim.
Uncertainty is aggravated pain.
Is he a ruin'd man ? then I am ready
With heart and hand to sooth his poverty.
Is he proscribed by law ? then I am ready
My country to abandon for his sake.
Say any thing, and I will bear it firmly
And meekly as I may.

CLAUDIEN.

My dearest love, I thought to have parted from
thee
With brighter omens of a glad return :
But now thou weep'st because the very day
Of my return is doubtful. If I stay
Two weeks or three weeks longer than we rec-
koned,
Shall I not still be welcome ?

ROSELLA.

O, mock me not with weeks ! thou knowest well
No time can make thee otherwise than welcome ;
To me most dearly welcome.
Keep thy mysterious secret, if thou must ;
But make amends by swearing on this hand

Not to extend thine absence for a day
Beyond the added time which thou hast mentioned.

CLAUDIEN.

Upon this hand, so lovely and so dear,
Not to be absent for a day — an hour
Longer than sad necessity compels me.
But thou meanwhile wilt keep me in thy
thoughts.

Write to me often ; wilt thou not, Rosella?
And be to me, in whate'er clime or country
A wayward fate may doom me to reside,
The very gleam and warmth of my existence.

ROSELLA.

A wayward fate may doom thee to reside!
What words are these? Thou never wilt return!

(Wringing her hands in anguish.)

VAN MAURICE (*aside to* CLAUDIEN).

Begone, begone! thy weakness will betray us.
Sister ; thou givest way to apprehension,
Like a poor perverse wife who has been spoil'd
With long indulgence. 'T is a paltry proof
Of thy affection in an hour like this,
To add to his distress. Fie! be more generous!

ROSELLA.

And art thou angry with me, gentle Maurice?
Thou art not wont to chide. O, woe is me!

There must be something wrong — far wrong,
indeed,
When he is sorrowful and thou unkind.

VAN MAURICE.

Pardon me, sister, something has distressed me ;
I meant not to have told thee till to-morrow.
Our cousin Hartman died last night.

ROSELLA.

So suddenly !

Awfully sudden ! I am sorry for it ;
Yes ; very, very sorry. Ah, poor Hartman !
I have, with too much levity, I fear,
Made his last days pass most uneasily.
He was vindictive, vain, and irritable :
But when the storm of passion passed away,
Who was more ready to repair a wrong
With generous amends ? Alas ! poor Hartman !
And thou too, gentle Claudien, weep'st for him,
Although he loved thee not. Well may'st thou
weep ;
For thou wert also one of his tormentors :
Ay, we did both of us too hardly press
Upon his natural infirmity.

CLAUDIEN.

Detested wretch ! I've been a fiend, a ——

VAN MAURICE (*laying hold of him, and pressing
his mouth*).

Claudien,

Art thou a madman? — Come, the wind is fair,
The vessel is already weighing anchor.
Bid to your mistress, then, a short adieu,
As cheerly as you may. (*They embrace and
separate.*)

Yes; bravely done, Rosella! — bravely done!
Thou art the firmest now.

ROSELLA (*stepping after CLAUDIEN*).
Take this, and this, and wear them for my sake.

Enter MARGARET.

MARGARET.

There is a ship-boy below with notice that the
Mermaid is just leaving port.

VAN MAURICE (*to CLAUDIEN*).
Come then, my friend; we may no longer tarry.

ROSELLA.

Go, Claudien: I will hie me to the roof
Of my pavilion; there I'll watch thy ship,
Till, like a sea-bird, on the distant waves
It fades away to nothing. Two hours still
It will be visible. Cast up thy mantle;
Make me, I pray, some signal from the deck.
Farewell, heaven prosper thee! farewell, fare-
well!

[*Exeunt CLAUDIEN and VAN MAURICE, but
the latter returns hastily, and whispers to
MARGARET.*]

ROSELLA.

What did he whisper to thee, Margaret? I am frightened at every thing.

MARGARET.

Nothing of importance: it was only to tell me that some necessary business might detain him from home the whole day; and, if so, you must not be uneasy.

ROSELLA.

Uneasy! I may be as I will now: it matters not how I am till Claudien return again.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *The Deck of a Ship, with a stormy Sea seen dimly beyond it. Sailors and Passengers are discovered, some on their knees, some clinging to the shrouds, some staggering about with wild gestures of despair, whilst some are endeavouring to work the ship, and disputing about what should be done ; and a great confusion of voices is heard through the noise of the storm. The whole light should proceed from one part of the deck ; viz. the binnacle, by which means want of expression of countenance in the under-actors will not be discovered, as none need come within the gleam of its light but those who can give expression. CLAUDIEN is discovered busy in assisting those who are endeavouring to save the vessel, near the bottom of the Stage.*

CAPTAIN (*on the front*).

I say it must be done ; she cannot else be saved. Boatswain, thy refractory spirit is more dangerous than the tempest. (*A great confusion of sounds and voices.*) All hands to work i' the instant ! Cut down the mast ; lighten her of every thing, bales, casks, and chests, — cast all to the deep !

BOATSWAIN.

By our Lady, it were downright cowardice to spoil ourselves of every thing for such a risk as this !

CAPTAIN.

Thou know'st nothing of the matter,

BOATSWAIN.

I have been in worse peril before, when both mast and freightage have been saved.

CAPTAIN.

Be silent, madman ! I am to judge of the peril, not thou. We are driving on the rocks of that very coast from which we departed : yonder gleams the lighthouse on the cliff.

MANY VOICES (*at once*).

Lord have mercy on us ! heaven have mercy on us !

CAPTAIN.

Silence, and hear my commands. All hands to work ! life and death hang on your present exertions.

[*Great noise and confusion, and they begin to cut down the mast and cast things overboard.*]

FIRST SAILOR (*with a loud voice*).

It is all in vain ! lighten her as you will, it can avail nothing as long as there is a murderer on board.

CAPTAIN (*catching hold of him*).

What mean'st thou ? On which of my passengers or crew dost thou fix such a horrible charge ?

FIRST SAILOR (*pointing to CLAUDIEN*).

To that man yonder, your noble Danish passenger. If the devil have him not presently under the waves, neither ship nor one soul of all her living freight will be afloat one hour longer.

CAPTAIN.

Thou speak'st in distraction.

FIRST SAILOR.

I know that sound in the blast : no natural tempest ever bellows so.

MANY VOICES (*as before*).

Heaven have mercy upon us ! it is a fearful sound !

FIRST SAILOR.

There be fiends on the clouds and on the waves ; they are roaring for their prey, and in God's name cast it to them instantly.

CAPTAIN.

Thou art beside thyself ! how knowest thou he is a murderer ?

FIRST SAILOR.

I heard him utter exclamations when he thought there was no one near him. Question

him thyself; if he will swear himself innocent of blood, send me to the bottom in his stead.

CAPTAIN (*beckoning* CLAUDIEN *to the front*).

Sir passenger, come hither. This man (*pointing to* FIRST SAILOR) has heard thee utter such words as compels him to accuse thee of murder. We may all be summoned few moments hence into the presence of our Great Judge, who cannot be deceived: if thou art guilty, cry to God for mercy and confess it; a ship in peril may not be laden with such an unblessed freight. Art thou innocent of blood?

CLAUDIEN.

I am innocent of deliberate murder, but not of blood.

FIRST SAILOR.

He confesses.

MANY VOICES.

He confesses! he confesses! away with him!

OTHER VOICES.

Cast him overboard, or we shall be all dead men presently.

CLAUDIEN.

Hear me first, before ye be so rash.

VOICES (*again*).

No, no, no! we cannot sacrifice our own lives for thine: cast him overboard.

FIRST SAILOR.

Bind him hand and foot, and cast him to the fiends that are roaring for him.

[They surround CLAUDIEN to bind him, when he draws his sword.]

CLAUDIEN.

I will cut down the first man who dares to lay hands on me. Bind a fellow-creature and cast him to the waves! ye are worse than the fiends ye are afraid of: and if they be roaring for me, as ye apprehend, doubt not but they will have me, whether I am bound or free.

CAPTAIN.

He says well: cast him overboard unbound, that he may save himself if possible.

[They again close round him to seize him, and he still keeps them off with his sword.]

CLAUDIEN.

Lay hands upon me at your peril! You need not be so fierce; for I will myself commit this body to the sea, that will, perhaps, be more merciful than you.

[He retires to the farther side of the deck, with his face to the crew and his back to the sea; then holding up his hand, as if uttering a short prayer, turns quickly round, and jumps overboard, the whole crew raising a wild cry, and remaining for a few moments after it in deep silence; the sound of the storm only heard.]

CAPTAIN.

He is a brave man, let him be what he may.
God have mercy on us, and send us safe on our
voyage! We have paid for it a fearful price!
(*Calling to some who are looking over the side of
the vessel.*) Can you see aught? Does he sink
or swim?

BOATSWAIN.

I saw his dark head once above the waves.

SECOND SAILOR.

I saw it too.

THIRD SAILOR.

So did I. God help him, and us too!

SECOND SAILOR.

Look, look, yonder, I see it again! but a huge
billow breaks over it: we shall see it no more.

THIRD SAILOR.

He is too deep now under water, to rise a
living man.

[*The sound of the storm as before, very loud.*]

CAPTAIN.

The tempest is as violent as ever! we must
lighten the ship after all.

[*A great clamour and commotion among the
crew, and the scene closes.*]

SCENE II.

A Lawyer's Study, lumbered with tables, books, and papers, &c.

Enter BORION, with a scroll in his hand, which he examines attentively. He then pauses, and considers before he speaks to himself.

BORION.

Proofs like these should condemn any man ; why should I recoil from the task ? (*Paces up and down, and then stopping short.*) Would this business were put into other hands ! My client is candid and specious, as far as speech is concerned, but that sinister eye, the play of those muscles by the mouth, the widening of the nostrils at every virtuous sentiment he utters : — physiognomy is the whimsy of simpletons, if there be any truth or sincerity in that man. But here he comes.

Enter KRANZBERG.

KRANZBERG.

Well, learned Sir, having had full time for consideration, what think you of it now ? (*A pause.*) You see, I found my prosecution on no slight or fanciful proofs. Thus it stands : next

heir to the deceased ; his confusion when we told him of the murder ; that unwary expression which fell from him, showing that he knew with what weapon the wound was inflicted ; and, above all, the dagger found in his apartment, — every thing combines to fix the foul deed upon him. There is no judge in the land who will hesitate to give sentence in my favour.

BORION.

In your favour, Sir ! is it favour to you that your near relation should be publicly executed as a murderer ? I thought you had prosecuted unwillingly, as next nearest of kin to the deceased, and therefore compelled to it.

KRANZBERG.

True — very true, learned Borion ; in my favour as a prosecutor, who, from duty, would make good his accusation. But as a man and a kinsman, with the affections of both, which heaven knows how deeply I feel ! most keenly and severely against me. You perceive the distinction here ?

BORION.

It had escaped me.

KRANZBERG.

I am drawn two different ways by two powerful ties ; but my duty to the public must be pre-

ferred. O, dear Sir ! you little know the painful conflict in this bosom.

BORION.

I can guess at it, Sir. But does Van Maurice, since his imprisonment, still continue to assert his innocence ?

KRANZBERG.

Of course he does. Is any man's assertion or oath regarded in a matter of this nature ?

BORION.

Yes, Sir ; there are some men, whose simple word will go far in a matter of any nature, and Van Maurice is one of those.

KRANZBERG.

Ah, my good Sir ; there is a prepossession in your mind, but let my wretched kinsman have the benefit of it ; I wish not to remove it. Indeed I knew of this prepossession beforehand ; and that I applied to you for the conduct of this prosecution, notwithstanding, shows how little I am disposed to deal hardly with the prisoner. — But here come the men whom you may question.

Enter a Servant, showing in the two Officers of Justice.

BORION (*waving his hand*).

Let them pass into the further apartment.

[*Exeunt Officers.*]

KRANZBERG.

You are cautious, I see, and would question them apart from me. But you are right; I am nowise offended; on the contrary, even your distrust of myself gives me confidence in your integrity. [*Exit BORION, following the Officers, while KRANZBERG looks angrily after him.*] The devil take his incredulous nature! who would demur on such flagrant proof as this? If it were not that the trial comes on to-morrow, and I dare not delay it, lest he should, after all, be innocent, I would put it into other hands that would undertake it more heartily. (*After consideration.*) No, no! I must press him to retain it. Were it known that he had given it up, that would create a strong prejudice against me. I must press him to retain it. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

A Prison: VAN MAURICE is discovered at the bottom of the Stage in a thoughtful disconsolate posture; he then comes forward and remains a short time, muttering to himself, before he speaks aloud.

VAN MAURICE.

And infamy and death must be my portion
For my adherence to the manly ties

Of honour and of friendship !—No alternative !
Betray his confidence to save my life !
Do what is *base* to save me from disgrace !
Surely, some fiend of darkness must be dealing
With my necessity, when thoughts like these
Contaminate my mind.
He came to me in misery ; in secret
His soul pour'd out its bitterness before me.
Away, away ! ye *base* and mean suggestions !
God will deliver me. — Or should his will
Appoint my life to be the sacrifice,
The mem'ry of the just shall be at length
Redeemed from all dishonour. [*Noise at the
door. Enter Gaoler.*]
Who's there ? let no one enter but my sister
Or the good priest ; have I not told thee so ?

Enter ARDUSOFFE.

ARDUSOFFE.

And may not your faithful counsellor also be
admitted ?

VAN MAURICE.

Ay, true ; I forgot thee, good Ardusoffe. —
Well, what hast thou done for me ? Hast thou
discovered any thing that may tend to my excul-
pation ? — Alas ! thou shakest thy head : thou
hast not been successful.

ARDUSOFFE.

Not, I fear, in any material degree. Your

servants unanimously declare their belief that you did not quit your apartments for the whole of that evening on which the fatal deed was committed : but as you were entirely shut up from the hour of twilight to almost midnight, the grounds of their belief are not satisfactory ; your apartments, unhappily, having a private door leading to the garden, and from thence into the street.

VAN MAURICE.

True ; their belief only, under such circumstances, is but weak evidence.

ARDUSOFFE.

It was your custom, they say, to ring your bell for some slight refreshment between nine and ten o'clock, but on that night, most unfortunately, you omitted it.

VAN MAURICE.

My studies occupied me so entirely, that I forgot it.

ARDUSOFFE.

I do most perfectly believe you : but who, sitting in judgment on attested facts, and compelled to pronounce sentence accordingly, will regard such asseveration ? In short, my dear client, I am obliged to forewarn you, that if you still persist in refusing to account for the dagger being found in your chamber, and your previous

knowledge that the deceased was slain by a wound from such a weapon, I see not how your judges can acquit you.

VAN MAURICE.

Be it so ! I am innocent : Heaven will protect me.

ARDUSOFFE.

God grant you deliverance ! But the ways of Divine Providence are mysterious as to this world. In the next, most assuredly, the innocent are always delivered.

VAN MAURICE.

Have you, then, in the course of your legal experience, known instances of the innocent suffering death for imputed crimes ?

ARDUSOFFE.

I have ; even when tried by an impartial judge, and the fair laws of their country.

VAN MAURICE.

But their memory was vindicated afterwards, else you had never been acquainted with such dismal perversion of circumstances.

ARDUSOFFE.

After many years, — nearly the lapse of half a century, it was discovered.

VAN MAURICE (*shuddering*).

Awful dispensation ? Almost all his contemporaries — those whom he had loved and regarded, would go down to their graves, believing him guilty and depraved.

(*Turns away from him much distressed.*)

ARDUSOFFE.

Let me conjure you, then, to do justice to yourself ! It is a fearful thing to be cut off in the prime of your days, — to die by the hands of an executioner, — to finish your course in disgrace.

VAN MAURICE.

It is a fearful thing ! — You tempt my mortal weakness almost beyond resistance.

ARDUSOFFE.

Let nature have its way ! O, consider of it !
Run not on self-destruction.

VAN MAURICE (*supporting himself on the shoulder of ARDUSOFFE*).

Forbear a few moments, good Ardusoffe ; I am considering of it.

ARDUSOFFE (*after a pause*).

The dew-drops stand upon thy forehead, and

thy whole frame is moved : decide as nature bids thee, and let this conflict cease.

[A pause, in which VAN MAURICE, sinking from the shoulder of ARDUSOFFE, covers his face with both his hands.]

O, have mercy on thyself, and let this conflict cease !

VAN MAURICE (*raising himself suddenly, with vehemence of gesture and voice*).

It hath ceased, Ardusoffe, I 'm now a man :
I will die honour'd in my inward mind,
And in the sight of heaven. Betide what will,
I 'll not betray my trust !

ARDUSOFFE.

Alas, alas ! may Heaven have pity on thee,
Since thou repell'st all pity for thyself !

Enter ROSELLA.

ROSELLA.

I left thee, dearest Maurice, cheer'd and tranquil,
Like one possessing hope ; what is the matter ?

ARDUSOFFE.

Dear lady, circumstances bear hard against your brother ; and, from some point of honour which I am not permitted to know, he refrains from exculpating himself. Join your entreaties

with mine ; you who are so deeply concerned in his safety and justification. Death and disgrace must not be incurred from romantic adherence to honour.

VAN MAURICE.

If I could gain a respite for some weeks !

ARDUSOFFE.

You may apply for it, and I will urge your suit ; but it will be refused. Kranzberg, for his own sordid interest, pushes on the trial ; and he is in high credit and favour with the judges.

ROSELLA.

O for my sake, if not thine own, my brother,
For my sake be entreated ! In thy ruin
I shall be ruin'd, agonised, and crush'd ;
Think not I could survive it !

VAN MAURICE.

Leave me, Oh leave me ; I am only fit
With mine own thoughts to commune. Your
entreaties
Do but the more distract me.

(Aside to ARDUSOFFE.)

Return to me again, but leave me now.

[Exit ARDUSOFFE.]

ROSELLA.

Alas ! and wilt thou not relent, dear Maurice ?
[A pause.]

Why dost thou shake thy head, and look on me
So ruefully? there is a meaning in it.

VAN MAURICE.

God save thee, my poor sister!

ROSELLA.

Yes, God will save me, saving thee my brother,
Not else; for if thou die a felon's death,
I never can survive it.—For my sake
And for the sake of him, thine absent friend,
Our gentle Claudien: would that he were here
To join with mine his earnest, strong entreaties!

VAN MAURICE (*putting his hand upon her lips in
an alarmed manner, and speaking low*).

Hush! utter not his name; 'tis good for thee
That he is absent.

ROSELLA.

Why that emotion at his name? Speak, speak!
Is he concern'd in this?

VAN MAURICE.

Inquire no further, seek no further misery:
Thou hast enough already.

ROSELLA.

A dreadful light breaks in upon me now;
Is Claudien concern'd? (*looks earnestly in his
face.*) He is, he is!
(*Faints in the arms of her brother.*)

VAN MAURICE.

It is a death-blow to her stricken heart.
How fix'd and pale that lovely countenance,
More like my mother's than I ever saw it.
Like her who loved us both and rear'd us
tenderly,
Who daily shed her widow's blessing o'er us,
And little thought for what calamities
We both might be reserved.
But she revives. How art thou, sweet Rosella?

ROSELLA.

I've been asleep, and thought some fearful
thing
Was girding me. — O no! it was not sleep:
I know it now distinctly.

VAN MAURICE.

Thou tremblest violently.

ROSELLA.

I tremble, but thou need'st not be afraid;
I shall not faint again.

VAN MAURICE.

Fear not for Claudien.

ROSELLA.

My own dear brother; gen'rous and devoted;
Is any thing more precious than thyself?
No, right is right; thou shalt not die for Claudien.
Thank God he's absent! let him so remain:

I'll to the judges ; I'll declare the truth ;
I'll vindicate thy innocence, my Maurice.

VAN MAURICE (*embracing her*).

I thank thee, kind Rosella ; but thy plea
Were altogether fruitless. —
Who would give credit to thy testimony ?
For they will deem, to save a brother's life,
Thou dost accuse an absent man. Beside,
Who will corroborate what thou aver'st ?
And what could'st thou aver ? I've told thee
nothing,
And, so God strengthen me ! I never will.

ROSELLA.

I'll to the judges ; cast me at their feet,
And beg respite till I can write to Claudien.

VAN MAURICE.

And would'st thou have him to return to Lubeck
That he may put himself into my place ?

ROSELLA (*distractedly*).

I know not what I would or what I wish ;
But thou, my noble Maurice, shalt not die.

VAN MAURICE.

Here comes the good confessor : leave me, sister.

Enter the Confessor, shown in by the Turnkey.

You're welcome, reverend Father. (*To the Turnkey.*) Does any attendant on this lady wait without ?

TURNKEY.

Yes, Baron; a lady waits for her, who accompanied her to the gate.

VAN MAURICE.

Desire her to enter; I would speak with her.
[*Exit Turnkey.*] Good Father, comfort this afflicted daughter.

(Speaking aside to ROSELLA, as he leads her to the Friar.)

Let nothing pass your lips that hath a reference
To what we spoke of: take good heed; be
secret.

Sooth her, good Father; thou hast words of
consolation for every earthly affliction.

Enter MARGARET.

I thank thee, friendly Margaret, for thy kind attendance on my poor distressed sister. Come near to me. (*Draws her to the front of the Stage, whilst the Confessor speaks in dumb show to ROSELLA behind.*) Rosella is not well; there is fever upon her spirits, and her mind wanders wildly. Be not alarmed at this, but give her an opiate,—a very powerful opiate: she has need of rest, and nature has no sleep for one so distracted with anxiety.

MARGARET.

I will do so: she has been forwatched and

greatly distressed. And I pray heaven, dear Baron, that you may also have rest!

VAN MAURICE.

I thank thee, Margaret. But do not tarry here! lead her away immediately. I do not wish to see her till the trial is over. (*Returning to ROSELLA.*) Farewell, dear sister! I must now give my thoughts to things which regard not this world. [*Exeunt ROSELLA and MARGARET.*] We will, if you please, good Father, retire to the inner cell. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

The House of KRANZBERG.

Enter KRANZBERG, followed by CORMAN, bearing a salver with wine, &c. which he sets upon a table.

KRANZBERG (*speaking as they enter*).

Thou art right, Corman; a cup of this old Rhenish will do me good. I have been the whole day in a state of presentation; the eyes of many have been upon me; my cumbersome suit of decorum sits heavily upon me now; I must drop it for awhile and unbrace myself.

CORMAN (*pouring out wine and presenting it*).

Here, Sir; this will refresh you in the mean time, and your repast will be ready presently.

KRANZBERG (*after drinking*).

Ha, ha, ha! what a mountebank world we live in, full of inconsistencies: every body eagerly running after some wild delusion or other! To think, now, that a sober philosopher like Van Maurice should start up from his books, his globes, and compass, to put a foolish kinsman out of the world, and all for the enriching of Simon Kranzberg, whom he likes as much as thou dost a bit of musty stock-fish. By my faith, it is some waggish devil that hath tempted him to this imbecility of wickedness.

CORMAN.

Yes, master; and the devil will take care of your interest for his own advantage.

KRANZBERG.

But I'll cheat him, too, in the long run.

CORMAN.

It must be some clever device, indeed, that cheats him.

KRANZBERG.

I'll give donations to the church; or I'll endow a chapel, and appoint a priest to pray my soul out of purgatory.

CORMAN.

Ah, Sir ! that will be a hard work for a simple priest of your appointment ; it would be work enough for an archbishop. But it will help at least to put you into credit with the world.

KRANZBERG.

Put me into cred it with the world ! Am I not in very good credit with the world ? — Why dost thou shake thy head so ? Am I not ? I have broken no laws : I have disregarded no rules of decency. I have preserved a show of kindness to all men ; ay, and have felt real kindness for some. What does the world know against me, that thou shouldst look so significantly ?

CORMAN.

I don't say that they know any thing against you ; but there is something in human nature called suspicion, that will sometimes contravene most provokingly all the good seeming that a painstaking man can put on.

KRANZBERG.

And what do they suspect ? What cause have I given for suspicion ?

CORMAN.

Why, my dear Sir, that story of the heiress stands somewhat between you and their good opinion.

KRANZBERG.

They stumble at a small impediment, methinks. Was it my fault that her needy uncle ran off with her fortune? Would they have had me marry a beggar, because I had inadvertently made suit to her?

CORMAN.

Nay, heaven forbid! that were too romantic for a sane burgher of Lubeck; but they are not yet become liberal enough to tolerate inadvertent oaths.

KRANZBERG.

Out on thee! Hadst thou managed that business for me with three grains of common sense, the transaction would never have been known.

CORMAN.

Ah, my dear master! but you forget that my three grains of common sense were coupled with your three grains of cunning, and they did not prove prosperous yoke-fellows.

KRANZBERG.

Go to! it is a fair character that has but one blot upon it.

CORMAN.

True, if there were but one.

KRANZBERG.

Lay they any thing else to my charge?

CORMAN.

That matter of the poor widow's leasehold, which you deprived her of so cleverly, was not exactly to their mind.

KRANZBERG.

Devil take them ! and they boggle at that too !
Had I not law on my side ?

CORMAN.

I fear you had only decision.

KRANZBERG.

No, no ! I had law. But those noodles are always canting about equity and natural justice ; and one is obliged to do so too, till it is enough to make one sick.

CORMAN.

To be sure this last effect is rather sickening.

KRANZBERG.

And thy untimely bantering is little better. Say what thou wilt, I know that I stand in as good credit with the world as any man in our imperial city. But who comes here ? Pshaw ! It is Ardusoffe ; I must on with my buckrams again.

Enter ARDUSOFFE.

ARDUSOFFE.

Sir, I am come from the prison of your un-

happy kinsman, on a most earnest suit, which your known goodness and humanity will not, I am confident, suffer you to refuse.

KRANZBERG.

Speak it plainly and freely, Sir. He is, indeed, unhappy, and I am little less so, in being forced to prosecute a near relation for such an atrocious deed. You don't know how much I feel on this unfortunate occasion.

ARDUSOFFE.

Better, perhaps, than you are aware of. Your inward dispositions are too well depicted on your countenance to leave any one in doubt of your real worth. My present suit will give you an opportunity of proving your professions. I come most earnestly to request that you will use your interest with the judges to have this trial put off for a few weeks.

KRANZBERG.

Ah, good Ardusoffe! would that my bounden duty to society did not pull me the contrary way; and I would, on my bended knees, pray that it might be put off, not only for a few weeks, but a few months, a few years; ay, for ever.

ARDUSOFFE.

Nay, nay! you exceed in tender sympathy: a few weeks is all that we desire, and I will this

moment go with you to the judges to beseech them to grant us this indulgence.

KRANZBERG.

No, that won't do ; I must go to the judges alone. On such occasions a third party creates embarrassment. You understand me ?

ARDUSOFFE.

I think I do, Sir ; and will trust to your exertions accordingly.

KRANZBERG.

My dear Sir, you do not understand me. I will leave no entreaty untried to gain what you desire for your client. But what is your object in this delay ? is there any witness that could exculpate your client, who might be summoned in that time ?

ARDUSOFFE.

Yes ; this is our reason for soliciting delay.

KRANZBERG.

And who is this witness ? and from what place do you call him ?

ARDUSOFFE (*drawing back from him*).

That is a matter, good Sir, less material for you to know than for us to conceal.

KRANZBERG.

Very true ; I should have remembered this : I respect you for your caution, though it is not

my way of proceeding. I am so free and open myself, that I forget the prudent habits of concealment, which may be commendable in others. And now I will honestly tell you that I am certain my suit to the judges for delay will be of no avail.

ARDUSOFFE.

That you are certain, may be true ; for you can make it so.

KRANZBERG.

You mistake me again. But I am not angry at this. I can forgive the jealousy which arises from the excess of laudable zeal ; and to prove this I will frankly serve your client in the only way in my power. I will gain over the guard, who are appointed for this evening's watch, and favour his escape from prison. Do you pause at this when there is such damning evidence against him ?

ARDUSOFFE (*drily*).

I shall report to him what you say.

KRANZBERG.

At the hour of twilight he will find his prison doors unbarred, and let him come forth fearlessly.

ARDUSOFFE.

I will go forthwith and report to him what you say. [*Exit.*

KRANZBERG.

Have I cozened that suspicious fellow at last ?
[*Re-enter CORMAN, who had retired upon AR-*
DUSOFFE's coming in.] I have cozened that sus-
picious fellow at last. If Van Maurice be caught
making his escape, the trial will proceed im-
mediately. The bright thought came into my
head of a sudden ; I wonder I did not think of
it before.

CORMAN.

But if he were really to escape and be out-
lawed, would not that serve your turn suffi-
ciently.

KRANZBERG.

Ay, if the present senior judge were to retain
his office ; but he will resign it in a month to one
who is most partially attached to the family of
Van Maurice. No, no ! we should have him re-
turning from his outlawry again, and submitting
to a mock trial, which would declare him inno-
cent, and restore him to his rights. No, no ! the
trial must proceed immediately ; and it will do
so if he be caught in an attempt to escape.

CORMAN.

Think you he will fall into the snare ?

KRANZBERG.

I think he will ; I am sure he will : and even
if he should refuse, we can raise a great clamour

and confusion about the prison walls as if he had attempted it, which may turn to our account nearly as well as the reality. I say *our*, for thou knowest well that when I take possession of the inheritance, a good portion of it will fall to thy share. Let me have my meal first, and I'll give thee thy directions about this matter afterwards.

CORMAN.

It is ready, Sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Before the walls of a Prison : a Sentinel is discovered walking to and fro by an arched Gateway, and several Men muffled in cloaks, peeping occasionally from behind an outer buttress near the front. A small Door at the further end of the arch opens slowly, and ARDUSOFFE enters by it, through the gateway, his face hid by his cloak.

SENTINEL.

Ho ! you pass not so sily as you think : who are you ? let me see your face ?

ARDUSOFFE (*in a feigned voice*).

A friend to the noble prisoner, and the same who passed into that door half an hour ago.

SENTINEL.

Thou dost not speak with the same voice, I'm certain.

ARDUSOFFE.

Nay, my good friend ; thine ears are deceived by thine own suspicion. (*In a whisper.*) Behold my face ; dost thou not remember it ?

[*Going close to the Sentinel and turning his back to the front of the Stage, he uncovers his face for a moment, on which the other, with a nod, suffers him to pass. He then proceeds on his way, and is about to go off, when CORMAN and his companions burst upon him from behind the buttress.*]

CORMAN.

We seize thee in the name of the law.

ARDUSOFFE (*still concealing his face*).

Go to ! you mistake me for another ; suffer me to pass. Ye have no right to detain me.

CORMAN.

Come under the lamp here, and let us see your face.

[*They drag him towards the light, he making great resistance, when KRANZBERG enters suddenly and lays hold of him.*]

KRANZBERG.

Resistance is in vain, Van Maurice : we seize thee in the act of making escape from prison ; and in the name of the state we secure thee.

ARDUSOFFE (*uncovering his face, and speaking in his natural voice*).

I make no resistance to the will of the state, signified to me by such a worthy member thereof.

KRANZBERG.

Ardusoffe !

ARDUSOFFE.

Yea, the same, and thy accomplice in endeavouring to persuade a prisoner to escape from the hands of justice. (*Seeing him look round significantly to CORMAN, who, thereupon, draws the other men to a distance.*) What, art thou afraid those men should hear us ; thou who art so free and open, even to imprudence ? Thou wilt become a character of perfection by and by, since thou correctest thy errors so completely.

KRANZBERG.

Is Van Maurice then so assured of his innocence that he refuses to fly ?

ARDUSOFFE.

Yes ; right well assured of that or of thy perfidy ; either assurance was sufficient ; and if the one be as well grounded as the other, there is a

higher agent at work for his deliverance than thou hast any knowledge of.

KRANZBERG.

What agent ?

ARDUSOFFE.

Providence, which protects the innocent, and returns the cruelty of the wicked into his own portion.

KRANZBERG.

Art thou become his confessor, too ? Why dost thou detain me here with thy homilies ?

ARDUSOFFE (*smiling archly*).

Being so artless thyself, thou canst not possibly guess my reason.

KRANZBERG (*furiously*).

He has escaped ! Ho, there ! — to the search ! to the pursuit ! the prisoner has escaped. (COR-MAN *and the others run to him, and he gives them orders confusedly.*) Go by the street, no — by the south walk — no, no, give the alarm there — lose not a moment.

[*Great bustle ; running different ways, while the alarm bell rings from the tower.*]

ARDUSOFFE (*aside, as he goes off*).

Let him take this alarm for his pains : would what he apprehends were true ! [Exit.

CORMAN (*to* KRANZBERG).

Perhaps it would be better to enter the prison first, and ascertain if the prisoner be really absent from his cell.

KRANZBERG.

Thou'rt right ; let us go immediately.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

The House of the Senior Judge. Enter the Judge with a paper in his hand, followed by his Secretary.

JUDGE (*as they enter*).

And tell my worthy colleague that I wish to have a conference with him, as soon as possible, on the subject of this petition to put off the trial for a month. It comes from those who must at least be treated with respect. What noise is that without? Go, see what it is. [*Exit Secretary.*
While the Judge employs himself reading other papers, re-enter Secretary.

SECRETARY.

There has been an attempt to favour the pri-

soner's escape, and the whole neighbourhood has been in commotion.

JUDGE.

But he has not escaped?

SECRETARY.

They believe not. Shall I go with the message?

JUDGE.

By no means, till we see how the matter stands.

Enter KRANZBERG.

You come in good time, Kranzberg : know you any thing of this escape, or attempted escape, of Van Maurice?

KRANZBERG.

An escape has no doubt been attempted, and has been as certainly foiled. But there is such a confusion of accounts, that it would be difficult to come at the real truth, as is generally the case in such matters.

JUDGE.

It is very bad to petition for delay, and in the mean time attempt to elude justice.

KRANZBERG.

The cause, I fear, is desperate, and that must

be their excuse who counsel the unhappy man ; and it is for you now to consider whether, after this account, any request for deferring the trial should be granted.

JUDGE.

Granted ! most assuredly not. Ought it to be ?

KRANZBERG.

It becomes not me to give any opinion as to that, though I must confess it might be dangerous : my errand here has a different object.

JUDGE.

Speak out, worthy Kranzberg ; what is it ?

KRANZBERG.

It is my earnest request that, in judging of my unhappy kinsman, you would cast this attempt from your consideration altogether, and let no mention of it be made in court.

JUDGE.

Is it not an additional proof of guilt ?

KRANZBERG.

Nay, my very learned and excellent Sir, do not so consider it. Who would not, in similar circumstances, with such strong presumptive evidence against him, do the same thing, even if he were conscious of being innocent ? Life is

sweet to every one, and the jeopardy of it appalling.

JUDGE.

Thy humanity equals thy candour. — But thou art too tender on this point.

KRANZBERG.

Do not say so, my excellent Sir. Let not this untoward attempt act on your mind to the prejudice of my miserable kinsman, if other evidence be not sufficient to condemn him.

JUDGE.

Let it be as thou wilt, then ; but we must have no delays. The trial shall commence to-morrow at the hour which was originally fixed. Excuse me, I am busy now ; good night.

[*Exit.*

KRANZBERG.

Well, thanks to my good stars ! I am not baffled, though I have been deceived. Matters still go as I wish.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. — VAN MAURICE'S *House ; an Ante-room in the Apartment of ROSELLA.*

Enter MARGARET and a Maid Servant, by opposite sides.

MARGARET.

I hope thy lady is still asleep ?

MAID.

O, no ! I wish she were. She called me a few minutes since, and I am going to her again.

MARGARET.

Is she aware how long she has slept ?

MAID.

No ; she thinks it still early, and I have not undeceived her.

MARGARET.

Thou hast done right, Jeanette. Ha ! she is up already !

Enter ROSELLA.

ROSELLA.

I have had a deep and death-like sleep. It

was strange that I should sleep so at such a time as this.

MARGARET.

And you feel yourself refreshed, I hope ?

ROSELLA.

I know not : I waked in confused bewilderment, which gave me a few moments of idiot-like insensibility ; but the dismal truth broke upon me at once : it was the blow of a leaden mace upon my breast ; I had better not have slept at all. But I am early enough to get to him ere he leave the prison. (*Looking at a timepiece on the wall of the room.*) Good heaven ! it is long past the hour ! he is already at the court, and I have not seen him. Why was I not called ? Bring me my mantle. No, I'll stay for nothing.

[*As she is about to go off, she is stopped by the entering of a Servant.*]

SERVANT.

There is a person below, who would speak with you, lady, on particular and important business.

ROSELLA.

His business should be such, indeed, who comes at an hour like the present.

MARGARET (*to Servant*).

Didst thou ever see him before ?

SERVANT.

I can scarcely say, Madam ; his face is so concealed by his bonnet and the buttoned-up collar of his cloak : but he is tall, and somewhat stately.

ROSELLA.

Let him come to me immediately.

[*Exit* Servant.

(*To MARGARET and the Maid.*) Leave me ; I would see him alone.

MARGARET.

I dare not leave you, you tremble so.

ROSELLA.

Don't mind that, but leave me.

[*Exit* MARGARET, &c.

If it should be ! I fear — why do I fear ?
Should I not wish it earnestly ? Wild thought !
For such a quick return no natural means
Could have effected : him it cannot be.

Enter CLAUDIEN *in disguise.*

[*She remains motionless, eyeing him from head to foot, while he looks round to ascertain that there be nobody in the room, and then discovers himself, on which she utters a suppressed cry.*]

Thou here ! O, Claudien, wherefore art thou come ?

But oh ! I know it well ; — thou should'st be
here.

My brother must not die.

CLAUDIEN.

Must not, and shall not, be thou well assured.
Thou know'st it then ; he has to thee reveal'd ?

ROSELLA.

To me nor no one else has he reveal'd it.

CLAUDIEN.

Yet is it known to thee.

ROSELLA.

I have by instinct learnt it. This poor heart !
Fear and affection have divined the truth.
The horror he express'd when I proposed
To write to thee and hasten thy return,
Came like a flash of lightning on my mind,
And then the truth was instantly reveal'd.

CLAUDIEN.

Noble Van Maurice ! generous, matchless friend !
Be comforted, my dearest ; he is safe.

ROSELLA.

But thou art not — O, thou art not, my Claudien !
(*Wringing her hands distractedly.*)

Alas, alas ! we're dreadfully beset.
The innocent must not die ; and with the guilty

Is twined the dearest chord of my existence.
Oh, words of misery ! to call thee guilty !
(Taking his hands and pressing them tenderly.)
There has been blood upon these hands — I
 know it ;
But 'twas the blood of a fell enemy
Who would have shed thy blood ; and may I not
Press them and bless thee still ?

CLAUDIEN.

Thou precious creature ! thy affection gleams
Like sunshine through one solitary loophole,
In a dark firmament of gather'd clouds,
That gilds one spot of ocean, hill or plain,
With brightness beautiful though circumscribed.
Thou cheer'st my soul, and be thou also cheer'd !
I must and I will save thy brother's life.
And for that thou hast made my own so precious,
I will be wary to preserve it also.

ROSELLA.

Yes, thou shalt live ; for heaven has been thy
 help,
Else thou couldst never, in so short a time,
Have reach'd this shore again.

CLAUDIEN.

The gale was rough ; the ship was driven back
Upon the breakers of a rocky shore ;
But I swam stoutly, and, when quite exhausted,
I caught a floating raft and gain'd the shore.

ROSELLA.

'T was Providence preserved thee : thanks to
Heaven !
And will preserve thee still.

CLAUDIEN.

That is my trust.

ROSELLA.

But, O, be cautious ! I will go forthwith
And to the Court declare the simple truth,
As to the deed, yet speaking of thee still
As one far distant in another land.
I am bold now ; I am braced for the task ;
Trust it to me.

CLAUDIEN.

Forbear, thou heart of tenderness and courage !
I've better means than this to save thy brother.

ROSELLA (*eagerly*).

And save thyself besides ?

CLAUDIEN.

Yes, even so ; my life is precious now :
Thou'st made it so. There is no time, my love,
For further explanation. Fare thee well !
I'm glad that I have seen thee first ; have heard
Thy words of strong affection, and have felt
This dear and gentle hand press'd to my heart.
Farewell, farewell !

ROSELLA.

Thy voice sounds sadly, as though many a league
Were going to divide us. How is this ?
Farewell pronounced with such solemnity !

CLAUDIEN.

But there be other obstacles than distance
May separate the dearest.

ROSELLA.

I apprehend thee well ; — the prison's walls, —
The dungeon and the chain. — O, God of
heaven !

(Seizing him wildly.) Thou shalt not go ; thou
shalt not leave this house :

I'll lock thee up within my chamber ; go
To this dread Court myself ; I have no fear,
For Heaven will teach me what I ought to say
When I am there ; will give me words of power
To save a brother's life — ay, and a life
Dear as a brother's. Now I feel assuredly
I shall prevail. There is no time to lose :
Go to my chamber ; haste thee to the cover.

(Dragging him to the door of an inner room.)

CLAUDIEN.

Art thou not mad, Rosella ?

ROSELLA *(dragging him still)*.

Not mad ; but thou wilt make me so : haste,
haste —

Alas ! I have no strength ; but let my weakness
Compel thee, generous Claudien !

(Kneeling to him.)

CLAUDIEN.

Dear love ! alarm bereaves thee of thy reason,
If thou believ'st thy chamber would protect
me.

Shouldst thou before the judges speak of me,
As of an absent man ! would they believe thee ?
Thy servants too ; they have admitted here
A stranger muffled up in mystery,
And must confess they saw him not depart.
'Thou 'lt run me into danger from the dread
And apprehension of it. —
Withhold me not ; I will be very prudent ;
I will not rashly risk my life. No longer
Must I remain ; moments are precious now ;
Let me depart.

ROSELLA.

Go instantly ; I am a hateful wretch
To keep thee here so long.

(Catching hold of him as he hurries off.)

Button thee closer, take this handkerchief,
And press it to thy mouth like one in pain.

(Giving a handkerchief.)

CLAUDIEN.

I thank thee, kind Rosella. *(Going.)*

ROSELLA (*running after him again*).
Halt in thy gait, and stoop thy shoulders too ;
Thy step and graceful bearing will betray thee.

CLAUDIEN.
Trust me, my love ; I'll not betray myself. [*Exit.*
[ROSELLA *alone, who continues to pace to
and fro in a hurried way, and presently*
MARGARET *enters.*]

MARGARET.
My dear friend ——

ROSELLA.
Who art thou ?

MARGARET.
Dost thou not know me ?
I met the stranger going hence, and thought
I might return to thee : have I done wrong ?
[ROSELLA *gives no answer, but walks about
as before.*]
Move not so rapidly, my dear Rosella,
But let thy body have a little rest.

ROSELLA.
Cease ! thou art foolish ; should my body rest,
My mind would go distracted.

MARGARET.
Walk as much as thou wilt within thy chamber,
Where no one will observe thee. 'Take my arm—
Heaven aid and pity thee, poor sufferer,
There is a cruel conflict in thy breast.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A narrow Lobby or Passage, leading to the Hall of Justice. Several People discovered, passing or loitering about.

Enter FATHER FRANCIS.

FATHER FRANCIS (*to an Under Officer*).
Stop, friend : thou art from the court ?

OFFICER.

Ay, with half the learning even of a monk, you may guess that.

FATHER FRANCIS.

Thou shalt enjoy thy joke unanswered, Officer. Thou art by office indifferent to the fate of an unhappy panel ; but thou wert an obliging fellow once, before thou wert spoilt by preferment, and now thou canst do me a favour.

OFFICER.

Mention it, good Father. I ought to have revered your cloth for your sake, if I do not reverence you for the sake of your cloth.

FATHER FRANCIS.

Has the advocate for the prisoner finished his defence?

OFFICER.

Ay, Heaven be thanked! I thought it would never have an end. He has just concluded it.

FATHER FRANCIS.

Return to the court, then, and desire him to come to me here, without loss of time. I have something of importance to communicate to him.

OFFICER.

I will, Father.

[*Exit.*

FATHER FRANCIS.

Woe is me that human nature should come to this! The pride and spirits of that creature, now, rise on an occasion like this. The condemnation or execution of a fellow-creature creates no other feeling in him but the enjoyment of increased importance and comparative security! Yet there was some good in him once. (*Pauses thoughtfully.*) There was good in him once: his first confession consisted of one petty crime, for which he seemed to be most penitent. But the steps of the confessional is a spot which he has long forsaken.

Enter ARDUSOFFE.

ARDUSOFFE.

You have something to communicate, good Father ?

FATHER FRANCIS.

Move a little this way : I have words for thy ear in secret.

ARDUSOFFE.

Has any thing occurred to throw light on this mystery ? any thing in favour of my unhappy client ? who comports himself with the sober dejection of a man resigned to his fate, though he firmly asserts his innocence ; and I, so help me God ! as firmly believe him.

FATHER FRANCIS.

I am glad thou dost.

ARDUSOFFE.

I could sit down and weep for his sake, he has so wound himself round my heart in the course of this dismal transaction.

FATHER FRANCIS.

Be comforted, my son ; thou canst do better things for him than that.

ARDUSOFFE.

Instruct me, reverend Father.

FATHER FRANCIS.

Produce in court the voluntary evidence of his confessor.

ARDUSOFFE.

How is this ? You said to me last night that he had confessed nothing.

FATHER FRANCIS.

There is no time to question me on this point now. I shall presently present myself before the judges, as evidence to exculpate the prisoner ; and when the oath has been administered — I pray thee move further this way : we may be overheard. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Hall of Justice. Two Judges sitting in state ; the Prisoner at the Bar ; KRANZBERG and BORION, and all the Attendants, &c. of a full Court.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Maurice Van Maurice, baron and citizen of this imperial city, we have heard your defence from the mouth of your advocate, pled with eloquence and ability, though opposed to much strong uncontradicted evidence against you : is

there any thing further which you wish to urge in your own behalf?

[VAN MAURICE *remains silent.*]

JUNIOR JUDGE.

Baron ; if you can offer any good plea why the sentence of the law should not be pronounced against you, as the murderer of your kinsman, Baron Hartman, let not this opportunity pass. We must otherwise proceed without delay.

VAN MAURICE.

Most honourable judges : The evidences against me are so strong, that I am compelled to confess, were such insufficient to convict a prisoner, there is scarcely a panel who at this or any other bar could be convicted. I have nothing to urge against your sentence, but that which I know you cannot and ought not to receive, — a simple and unqualified assertion of mine own innocence.

SENIOR JUDGE.

There is no occasion to say further.

VAN MAURICE.

Pardon me, my Lord, there is occasion ; and I am permitted so to do.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Proceed, then.

VAN MAURICE.

I am well aware that an assertion of mine own innocence cannot be received for my exculpation, even when I recall to your consideration, that I am the son of an honourable father, who has served the state in the senate and the field, and shed his blood for that service in the only way in which it becomes blood to be shed, that is derived from a source so honourable : that I have been reared under his eye, in rectitude and truth, which has never yet on any occasion been impugned : that love of worldly wealth, the only motive for committing the crime with which I am charged, is a propensity from which I am known to be altogether free. It cannot, I repeat, be received for my exculpation, but may surely, when joined to such considerations, well justify your acceding to my earnest request, that you would grant me three weeks' delay, ere your verdict be pronounced, that I may if possible prove mine innocence.

Yes, I request it earnestly ; for who,
Of woman born, shrinks not from death inflicted
Before the gazing eyes of multitudes, —
Inflicted with disgrace. I do entreat you,
For that I leave behind me those most dear,
Who will, if such my punishment, receive
A stroke more terrible than headsman's axe,
The wretch's momentary bane, can give. —

I do beseech ye, for that ye yourselves
Hereafter may be wrung with deep compunc-
tion,

When the good citizens of Lubeck, moved
With gratitude for the brave father, coupled
With pity for the son of such a parent,
Shall scowl upon ye as you pass along
Her public streets, as those who, in his misery,
Denied some weeks of respite to the offspring
Of their once loved commander.

I do appeal to all within these walls,
The citizens of this my native city ;
I do appeal to every honest man
Of whate'er town or kingdom ; yea, to those
Who, banish'd forth from the community
Of social man, have but the forest waste
For their wild home, and for their polity
The light of untaught reason, whether this,
Your pitiless refusal of my suit,
Be not at enmity with every sympathy
Of common nature. I appeal to all.

MANY VOICES (*at once*).

He's right, he's right ; he speaks good reason,
sooth !

SENIOR JUDGE.

Silence in the court.

VAN MAURICE (*looking round on the spectators*).
Ye pity me, and I do thank you for it.

I know I shall hereafter be restored
To lost esteem and good men's love. — Alas !
The fisherman in his small boat, when drifted
To the wild cat'ract's brink, is seen no more
Till, from the boiling nether gulph cast up,
Amid the fierce turmoil of warring eddies,
Jagg'd rocks and churning foam, a sorry sight
Of mangled, stripp'd, and sever'd limbs appears.
I may be so restored, with praise shed o'er me
As unavailing as the rainbow tints,
That through the cat'ract's cloudy spray may
gleam
Upon the perish'd wretch.

Enter ARDUSOFFE *and* FATHER FRANCIS.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Again I say, keep silence in the court!
(*Turning to the prisoner.*) You aver that you
are innocent; and if this be so, it is at least
known to you, who is the guilty person. Name
him, then, that justice may take its course, and
you shall have full time allowed you to prove
your assertion. Refusing to do this, you become
your own destroyer, and have no right to cast
the blame upon us.

VAN MAURICE.

I have said, my Lords, that I cannot do this
without betraying confidence; and were I to
do so, should I deserve to be believed in any

thing I might reveal? He who betrays confidence to save himself, may utter falsehoods also from the same urgent temptation.

SENIOR JUDGE.

And this is your determination?

[VAN MAURICE *bows.*]

JUNIOR JUDGE.

You screw your sense of honour, noble Baron, to the romantic pitch. Consider better of it. Is this your final determination? [VAN MAURICE *bows again.*] Then, though most painfully, we must proceed to give sentence as the law directs.

ARDUSOFFE (*advancing*).

Stop, my Lords. In this extremity, I am warranted to bring forward evidence to exculpate my client, which might not otherwise have been justifiable. This holy Father hath that to reveal which concerns the life and honour of the prisoner, and I claim that he may be heard.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Reveal penitential confessions!

ARDUSOFFE.

Yes, my Lord, to save the life of an innocent person; and show me that law of God or man which forbids it.

JUNIOR JUDGE.

He must speak upon oath.

ARDUSOFFE.

Let it be administered to him as you please.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Let him be sworn.

[FATHER FRANCIS *is led to the further end of the hall, where the oath is administered to him in dumb show. He then advances slowly to the front, as if unwell.*]

ARDUSOFFE.

What is the matter, good father?

FATHER FRANCIS.

I am somewhat faint; may I be permitted to withdraw for a few moments?

ARDUSOFFE (*after looking to the Judges, who nod assent*).

You are permitted. [Exit FATHER FRANCIS.

KRANZBERG.

This monk, methinks, is strangely seized on the sudden. Will a lie or two choke a friar?

ARDUSOFFE (*to KRANZBERG*).

If thou canst find one man in Lubeck who doubts the veracity of Father Francis, make that a plea for setting aside his evidence: thou hast my leave to do so.

VAN MAURICE (*aside to* ARDUSOFFE).

Has Father Francis confessed any one concerned in this matter?

ARDUSOFFE (*aside to* VAN MAURICE).

Why else should he volunteer this evidence?

After a pause, enter CLAUDIEN, *disguised as*
FATHER FRANCIS.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Declare to us what thou knowest of this atrocious deed.

CONFESSOR.

That which is only known to Heaven, the prisoner, and myself, I will declare; and nothing but the truth shall pass these lips.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Proceed without further prelude.

CONFESSOR.

The panel at your bar was, on the fatal evening when Baron Hartman was slain ——

KRANZBERG.

Gentle expression! I should say — murdered.

JUNIOR JUDGE.

Interrupt not the witness.

CONFESSOR.

Well, be it termed as you please. I say, he, your panel, was the whole of that evening

shut up within the walls of his own library, when Count Claudien, his friend, entered the room by a private door from the garden, with blood on his hands and agony in his heart.

VAN MAURICE.

Thou liest, false priest! I made to thee no such confession. Mine own sins, and mine own alone, were revealed to thee. (*To the Judges.*) Regard not what he says, for he is perjured.

JUNIOR JUDGE.

Silence! do not interrupt him: it is for us to judge of this matter. (*To the Confessor.*) Proceed.

CONFESSOR.

He entered, as I have said, with blood upon his hands, and told, in much agony of mind, to this, your noble prisoner, that he had been, a short half-hour before, attacked near the ramparts by Baron Hartman, who rushed furiously upon him with his drawn sword: that they fought, and Hartman was disarmed; upon which he treacherously drew his dagger, attempting to stab him; but he, this Claudien, being the stronger man, threw the other upon the ground, and bent over him with one knee upon his breast. (*A pause.*)

SENIOR JUDGE.

Proceed ; art thou ill again ?

ARDUSOFFE.

He will recover breath presently ; give him time.

CONFESSOR.

In this position were those unfortunate adversaries, when Hartman, in passion, uttered words most false and injurious of a lady beloved by Claudien ; upon which, this unhappy Claudien drew his own dagger from his belt, and stabbed him to the heart. That was the blood-stained dagger found in the apartment of Van Maurice.

VAN MAURICE.

I can forbear no longer ; if this monk
Tell such a tale as drawn from my confession,
By all most sacred held in earth or heaven,
He lies a thousand times !

CONFESSOR.

But wilt thou also swear that Claudien came
not into thy library on that fatal night, and told
thee a story similar to that which I now repeat ?

VAN MAURICE.

Do not beset me thus ! the Count is absent,
And cannot now defend himself. Whatever
May be your good intentions in my favour,
As friendly aid I utterly reject them.

KRANZBERG.

Will any one be fooled by such bungling jugglers playing into one another's hands so palpably?

BORION.

Most honourable Judges, I think you cannot admit of such evidence as this. There is collusion here.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Is there any farther evidence to produce? (*A pause.*) I presume there is none.

[*The Judges confer closely together in dumb show, while the Prisoner and others speak in an under-voice.*]

VAN MAURICE (*beckoning to the Confessor*).
Come this way, friar.

KRANZBERG.

No speaking privately to a witness in court.

ARDUSOFFE.

The evidence being closed, it may now be admitted.

VAN MAURICE.

Come hither, stealthy monk, for holy father
I never more may call thee: (*Beckoning as before.*)

[*Confessor goes nearer.*] So unwilling!
What fiend of darkness hast thou tamper'd with?

No earthly man but one could to thy ear
What thou reveal'st convey, and he's far distant.

CONFESSOR (*in a low voice to VAN MAURICE*).
Not far distant, Maurice.

[VAN MAURICE *pushes him away, and with an eager expression of countenance points to the door; then sitting hastily down, remains in a stooping posture, covering his face with his hands.*]

KRANZBERG (*to ARDUSOFFE*).

We shall know presently what all those juggling deceptions of yours will produce. Thou hast trained thy actors to admiration. But honesty is the best policy after all; this good saying I have always maintained.

ARDUSOFFE.

As far as words will go, sapient Sir; and the fate of thy last night's treachery has confirmed it. A laudable consistency of character, when both words and actions teach the same lesson.

VAN MAURICE (*starting up*).

They are long of coming to a decision.

ARDUSOFFE.

Nay, they have consulted but a little while.

VAN MAURICE.

I have sat on that bench a long time.

ARDUSOFFE.

But a few minutes, dear Baron.

VAN MAURICE (*looking to Confessor, who stands at a distance*).

Not yet gone !

ARDUSOFFE.

Did you expect him to go ?

VAN MAURICE.

My understanding had left me : I knew not what to expect.

ARDUSOFFE.

Hush ! the Judges are preparing to pronounce sentence.

VAN MAURICE (*looking up fearfully*).

Is it for life or death ? (*Averting his eyes hastily.*) It is not life.

SENIOR JUDGE.

Baron Van Maurice, having duly considered the evidence against you, and that also which has been produced in your favour, we feel ourselves constrained to pronounce upon you the sentence of the law. And forasmuch as murders have, of late years, become more frequent amongst people of noble condition, we see good to revive, upon this occasion, a law which has been too long laid aside.—Maurice Van Maurice, for this atrocious murder which you have com-

mitted, we condemn you to be broken alive upon the wheel ; and to-morrow, before mid-day, this sentence shall be executed on your mortal body. May God be merciful to your immortal soul, which you have put into such fearful jeopardy !

[VAN MAURICE *stands motionless on the spot ; a murmur of horror sounds through the hall, KRANZBERG alone looking triumphant ; while the Confessor sinks into the arms of ARDUSOFFE, who prevents him from falling on the ground.*]

OFFICER OF THE COURT.

Undo his cowl, and give him a cup of water.

ARDUSOFFE (*drawing his cowl still closer*).

Let him alone. It is only a momentary weakness : he revives.

CONFESSOR (*aside to ARDUSOFFE*).

Let go thy hold : I am well now, and think I shall be strong. (*Advancing with a stately step in front of the Judges.*) My Lords, I needs must strongly raise my voice against this sentence which ye have pronounced upon a man most innocent.

O, more than innocent ! a man most virtuous.

Ay, more than virtuous ; e'en to honour's summit

Most nobly raised, whereon he stands aloft,

'Twixt heaven and earth, so godlike, that the
mind
Scarcely believes this nether world of sin
Hath been his previous home.— He is most
guiltless.

SENIOR JUDGE.

What proof givest thou of this, and who art
thou who hast twice this day addressed us with
mien and air so varied, and two such different
voices? ——

CONFESSOR (*dropping his disguise*).

The man who did the deed: the unhappy
Claudien.

SENIOR JUDGE.

And thou confessest thyself to be the mur-
derer of Hartman?

CLAUDIEN.

You call it murder — so it may be called.
He at the moment lay unarm'd; I, therefore,
Can make no plea of self-defence. But murder,
Deliberately devised, ne'er stain'd these hands:
And if there be a man in this assembly
Who loves a virtuous woman — such, I trow,
In every court and crowd are to be found —
Let him declare how he should feel on hearing
Her fair name outraged by a sland'rous tongue,
The caitiff struggling to elude his grasp:
And if a fatal stroke by rage inflicted

He can in conscience deem deliberate blood-
shed,
Being so circumstanced, I am a murderer.

JUNIOR JUDGE.

How camest thou hither? Didst thou not
sail in the Mermaid, bound for Copenhagen?

CLAUDIEN.

I did: but agony of mind wrung from me,
unawares, some words of exclamation and dis-
closure, which one of the crew overheard; and
when that tempest, which lately rocked your
walls, began to vex our course, and put the ship
in peril, this man accused me as a murderer.
The frightened mariners would no longer share
the risk with such an unblessed passenger, and I
was cast into the deep.

JUNIOR JUDGE.

Fearful extremity! How wert thou preserved?

CLAUDIEN.

I swam while strength remain'd, and then em-
braced
A floating plank, which bore me to the land.
The tempest and the sea had pity on me;
And will ye then destroy what they have spared?
I beg for mercy: I am not ashamed
To ask, ay, to implore your clemency;

For, guilty as I am, I am so circumstanced
That life is dear to me. (*Pointing to VAN
MAURICE, who is now on his knees,
stretching out his hands to the Judges,
but unable to speak.*)

And see, who kneels before you ! one who knelt
not for his own life ; who never, till this moment,
bent his honoured knee but to that Almighty
Judge, who hath commanded weak and erring
men to be merciful, that they may obtain mercy.

[*The Judges whisper to one another.*]

JUNIOR JUDGE.

Thy case, Count Claudien, is piteous, though
thou art very guilty. We must withdraw awhile
before we make any reply to thy appeal for
mercy. [*The Judges withdraw.*]

[*CLAUDIEN, turning to VAN MAURICE, spreads
out his arms, and the latter, rushing into
them, strains him to his bosom.*]

VAN MAURICE.

Who would not live or die for such a man ?
My noble friend ! but thou shalt live. The very
stones of these walls will cry out against them,
if they have not mercy on thee.

KRANZBERG.

If the Judges suffer themselves to be deluded

with all this mummary, they are no true successors of King Solomon.

VAN MAURICE.

Deceit dwells within thine own miserable breast, and thou perceivest deceit in every thing.

KRANZBERG.

There is little penetration required in this case. It is a mighty convenient thing to have the dagger of a friend and brother-in-law to clear one's way to a rich inheritance.

VAN MAURICE.

Thou liest most foully and most wickedly.

KRANZBERG (*drawing from his cloak a concealed weapon, and rushing furiously on him*).

The lie to me! thou half-condemned felon!

CLAUDIEN (*doing the same, and putting himself between them*).

Attack an unarmed man, thou hellish caitiff!

[*They fight, and ARDUSOFFE and others endeavour to part them, but cannot effect it, till CLAUDIEN has run KRANSBERG through the body, and received a wound from him.*]

This hand of mine is fated to shed blood. Caitiff as he is, I wish I had not slain him.

ARDUSOFFE.

See how he gathers in his wrung and withering features, as if he cursed us all in the very agonies of death.

CLAUDIEN.

Say not so ! say not so ! Who can divine the thoughts of a dying man, be he ever so wicked ? — He is dead now, and I may soon be as him.

VAN MAURICE (*alarmed*).

What sayest thou ? There is blood from thy side : thou art wounded.

CLAUDIEN.

I am faint and sick : let me have air, I pray you.

Re-enter the Judges, and resume their seats.

SENIOR JUDGE.

This is our decision. Forasmuch as the murder of Hartman was not a premeditated act, but perpetrated, though unjustifiably, in a moment of provocation and passion ; and further, that the criminal hath delivered himself up to justice, making full confession of the crime, we remit the punishment of death, and condemn the Count Claudien of Denmark to perpetual banishment from the city and territories of Lubeck. In four and twenty hours from this time, thou must

depart. Being ever again seen within the realm, after that period, death, according to the utmost rigour of the law, is thy portion.

CLAUDIEN.

I thank your clemency. If my soul and body keep together so long, I will obey you; but if otherwise, ye will not refuse to my mortal remains a spot of earth for their resting-place, and the dust of your land to cover them. — This is my request: — that I lie ——— may lie where my friend ——— (*Struggling in vain to keep down his emotion.*) — I thank your clemency.

(*Is supported by VAN MAURICE.*)

JUNIOR JUDGE (*descending hastily from his seat*).

What means this? has he slain himself? — And who lies here? Kranzberg dead, and bathed in blood! Such outrage in a court of justice! — Who permitted it? Every one present is answerable to the law for this.

ARDUSOFFE.

Kranzberg, in the rage of disappointment, was, as Borion and all here present can witness, the aggressor. We endeavoured to separate them, but ere we could effect it, these bleeding wounds were given and received.

Enter ROSELLA, joyfully.

ROSELLA.

I have heard it—I have heard the joyful tidings!

(*To VAN MAURICE.*) Thou art acquitted and Claudien not condemn'd.

Ay, well may'st thou so hold him to thy heart! I will embrace ye both.

VAN MAURICE.

Forbear, dear sister; do not press upon him.

ROSELLA.

What is the matter? There is no joy here. Claudien, thou'rt very pale; there's blood upon thee.

O, misery, misery! (*Wringing her hands.*)

VAN MAURICE.

Do not give way to such frantic lamentations; he is severely wounded, but may yet recover. Have patience and do not distract him with outrageous sorrow.

ROSELLA.

I will be patient! yes, I will be patient!
'T is Heaven chastises; I will bear it meekly.
But is there yet for me no sound of kindness,—
No dear word of affection, gentle Claudien,
From thy pale lips, so pale and so compress'd?

Alas, alas ! thou look'st upon the ground,
And dost not look at me !

VAN MAURICE.

He is very faint, and hears not what thou
sayest.

*[She embraces the knees of CLAUDIEN, who
sinks slowly to the ground, supported by
VAN MAURICE and ARDUSOFFE, and the
curtain drops.]*

THE BRIDE:

A DRAMA.

IN THREE ACTS.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

RASINGA.

SAMARKOON, *his Brother-in-law.*

JUAN DE CREDÁ, *a Spanish Physician.*

SAMAR, *a Child, and Son of Rasinga.*

EHLEYPOLIE, } *Officers of Rasinga.*
MIHDOONY, }

Officers, Domestics, Robbers, Spearmen,
&c.

WOMEN.

ARTINA, *Wife of Rasinga, and Sister of Samarkoon.*

MONTEBESA, *Mother of Rasinga.*

THE BRIDE.

SABAWATTÉ.

Nurse, Attendants, &c.

Scene, in Ceylon.

THE BRIDE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Scene, before the Castle of Rasinga.*

Enter EHLEYPOLIE, meeting MIHDOONY and two Officers of the Chieftain's household.

EHLEYPOLIE.

WELL met, my comrades! I have words for you.

MIHDOONY.

We doubt it not; thou'rt bountiful in words.

FIRST OFFICER.

Thou never wert a niggard of such treasure.

EHLEYPOLIE.

Ay, but the words which ye shall now receive,
Are not the passing ware of daily traffic,
But such as in each list'ner's fancy wakes
Responding sounds, such as from twisted shell
On sea-beach found, comes to the bended ear

Of wand'ring child ; sounds strange and full of
omen.

MIHDOONY.

What ! evil omen ? storms and hurricanes ?

EHLEYPOLIE.

Fy on 't ! A stirring, tinkling, hopeful sound :
The ring of scatter'd largess, sweeter far
Than pipe or chord or chant of forest birds :
The sound of mummary and merriment :
The sound ——

But wherefore stare ye on me thus ?
List : I will tell ye what concerns us all.

MIHDOONY.

Out with it then ! for it concerns us all
To be no more tormented with thy folly.

EHLEYPOLIE.

Our Lord Rasinga wills, that we, brave mates,
With fifty armed followers and *their* followers,
Shall be in readiness by early dawn,
To march in goodly order to the mountains.

FIRST OFFICER.

I like not mountain warfare.

SECOND OFFICER.

No, nor I.

MIHDOONY.

To force our toilsome way through thick rank
woods,

With bleeding limbs drained by a hundred
leeches !

EHLEYPOLIE.

Fy, lazy cowards ! shrink ye from adventures
Which gentle lady, in her palanquin,
Will share with you ?

MIHDOONY.

A gentle lady, say'st thou ?

EHLEYPOLIE.

Yes, ye dull dolts, I say so. — Brave Rasinga
Has with one wife, for a good term of years,
(Lulled by some charm of sorcery) been satisfied.
It is good time that he, like other chiefs,
Should have a first sultana and a second,
Or any such arrangement as becomes
His age and dignity. So, in gay trim
With our arm'd band, we by to-morrow's dawn
Must be in readiness. — These are your orders,
Sent by our lord through me.

MIHDOONY.

Who is this honoured lady of the mountains ?

EHLEYPOLIE.

Canst thou not guess ? — The aged chieftain's
daughter,
Whose petty hold was sack'd by daring robbers
Not many weeks gone by. He and his daughter

Were dragg'd as prisoners from their ruin'd
home.

In this sad plight, our chief, with Samarkoon,
The valiant brother of his present wife,
And a good strength of spearmen, met them ;
charged

The bootied spoilers, conquer'd and released
Their wretched prey. — And ye may well suppose
The lady's veil, amidst the strange confusion,
Could not be clutched so close, but that Rasinga
Might see the lovely face it should have cover'd.

MIHDOONY.

O now I understand it ; for, methinks,
Rasinga had not else brought to his house
Another bride to share it with Artina.

[SAMARKOON, *who has entered behind them
unperceived, and overheard part of the
preceding dialogue, now rushes forward
indignantly.*

SAMARKOON.

Ye foul-tongued knaves, who so belie your
master !

What words are these which ye have dared to
utter ?

EHLEYPOLIE.

My lord, I crave your pardon ; I have uttered
The orders which Rasinga charged me with,

That these (*pointing to MIHDOONY and Officers*)
 should straight prepare an armed band
 To take their way to-morrow for the mountains.

SAMARKOON.

To bring a bride from thence? Speak out, I
 charge thee,
 Thou lying knave! Went not thy words thus far?

EHLEYPOLIE.

If they be true or lying words, I wot not.
 What may within a guarded palanquin
 Be from the mountains brought, I may but guess.
 Perhaps some speaking bird or jabb'ring ape.

SAMARKOON (*striking him*).

Take that—and that—thou false audacious slave:
 Dar'st thou to answer me with mockery?

[*Exit EHLEYPOLIE sulkily, followed by MIH-
 DOONY and Officers.*]

Manet SAMARKOON.

Base sordid reptiles! for some paltry largess
 And passing revelry, they would right gladly
 See peace and order and domestic bliss
 To misery and wild confusion changed.
 Hateful suggestions! base and vague conjectures,
 Which vulgar minds on slight foundation rear!
 All false! —————

And yet they are upon my heart

Like the compressure of a coiled boa,
Loathly, but irresistible.

A bride!

It cannot be! — altho' her unveil'd face
Was of surprising beauty — O how lovely!
Yet he bestow'd on her but frigid praise,
And still continued to repress my ardour,
Whene'er I spoke of the fair mountain maid,
With silent stern reserve. — Is this like love?
It is not natural.

Ah! but it is;
It is too natural, — deep subtle nature.
How was my idiot soul so far beguiled
That I ne'er thought of this?

Yes, yes, he loves her!
Loves her whom I so well — so dearly love,
That every female image but her own
Is from my heart effaced, like curling mists
That, rising from the vale, cling for a while
To the tall cliff's brown breast, till the warm
sun

Dissolves them utterly. — 'T is so; ev'n she
Whom I have thought of, dreamt of, talk'd of,
— ay,

And talk'd to, though in absence, as a thing
Present and conscious of my words, and living,
Like the pure air around me, every where.

(After a pause.)

And he must have this creature of perfection!

It shall not be, whatever else may be !
As there is blood and manhood in this body,
It shall not be !

And thou, my gentle sister,
Must thy long course of wedded love and honour
Come to such end ! — Thy noble heart will break,
When love and friendly confidence are fled.
Thou art not form'd to sit within thy bower
Like a dress'd idol in its carved alcove,
A thing of silk and gems and cold repose :
Thy keen but generous nature —— Shall it be ?
I'll sooner to the trampling elephant
Lay down this mortal frame, than see thee
wrong'd. (*After a considerable pause.*)

Nay, nay ! I am a madman in my rage.
The words of that base varlet may be false.
Good Montebesa shall resolve my doubts.
Her son confides to her his secret thoughts :
To her I'll go, and be relieved from torment,
Or know the worst at once. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

The Apartment of MONTEBESA.

SABAWATTE is discovered at work and singing.

SONG.

The gliding fish that takes his play
In shady nook of streamlet cool,
Thinks not how waters pass away,
And summer dries the pool.

The bird beneath his leafy dome,
Who trills his carol, loud and clear,
Thinks not how soon his verdant home
The lightning's breath may sear.

Shall I within my bridegroom's bower,
With braids of budding roses twined,
Look forward to a coming hour
When he may prove unkind ?

The bee reigns in his waxen cell,
The chieftain in his stately hold,
To-morrow's earthquake,—who can tell ?
May both in ruin fold.

Enter MONTEBESA, as the song is concluded.

MONTEBESA.

Did I not hear thee singing, as I came,
The song my dear Artina loves to hear ?

SABAWATTÉ.

Ev'n so, good lady ; many a time I sang it
When first I was attendant in her bower ;
Ere, at your own desire, and for my honour,
She did resign me to your higher service.

MONTEBESA.

Sing it no more : alas ! she thought not then
Of its contain'd allusions to a fate
Which now abides herself.

SABAWATTÉ.

No, not her fate ; you surely mean not so :
She is a happy wife, the only wife
Of brave Rasinga, honour'd and beloved.

MONTEBESA.

She was and is as yet his only wife.

SABAWATTÉ.

As yet his only wife ! and think you then
She will not so continue ?

MONTEBESA.

Sabawatté,

It grieves me much to tell thee what perforce

Must soon be known to all ; my son Rasinga
Hath set his heart upon a younger bride,
Perhaps a fairer too.

SABAWATTÉ (*eagerly*).

No ; not a fairer.
I'd peril life and limb upon the bet,
She is not half so fair, nor half so good.

MONTEBESA.

Be not so hasty. — Why dost thou regard it
As such a grievous thing ? She has already
Enjoyed his undivided love much longer
Than other dames have done with other lords,
And reason teaches she should now give place.

SABAWATTÉ.

Reason and cruelty sort ill together ;
A loorie haunting with a spotted pard.
Ah ! woe the day ! Why have you told me this ?

MONTEBESA.

Because I would upon your sadden'd brow
Print traces which may lead our poor Artina
To question thee ; and thou, who art her friend,
Canst by degrees, with gentle, wise precaution,
Reveal to her what she must needs be told.

SABAWATTÉ.

I cannot : put not such a task on me,
I do implore your goodness ! — No, I cannot.

MONTEBESA.

Hush, hush ! I hear the footsteps of a man,
But not Rasinga. — It is Samarkoon ;
I know his rapid tread. — Be wise ; be silent ;
For he awhile must live in ignorance.

*Enter SAMARKOON, and SABAWATTÉ retires to
some distance.*

A happy morning to you, youthful kinsman !

SAMARKOON.

As it may prove, good lady : happy morning
Oft leads to woeful eve, ay, woeful noon.

MONTEBESA.

These are strange sombre words ; what is the
matter ?

Why dost thou look both sorrowful and stern ?

SAMARKOON.

I have good cause, if that which I have heard
Be aught but a malignant, hateful tale,
On mere conjecture founded. Answer me,
If thou know'st nothing of a num'rous train
In preparation, by Rasinga's orders,
To fetch home to his house a fair young bride ?
There 's no such thing. — Speak — speak ! I will
believe thee ;

For if to thee unknown, there's no such thing.—

[*A pause, he looking inquisitively in her face.*]
Thou dost not speak ; thou dost not answer me ;

There's trouble in thine eye.—A with'ring curse
Light on his heartless heart, if this be true !

MONTEBESA.

Brave Samarkoon ! thou art not wise, so fiercely
To question me of that which well may be
Without my knowledge ; —that which, if it be,
Nor thou nor I have any power to alter.

SAMARKOON.

Which *if* it be ! that *if* betrays an answer ;
A shameful answer, shunning open words.
Dear, dear Artina ! thou hast climb'd already
The sunny side of Doombra's mountain ridge,
And now with one short step must pass the
bounds

Dividing ardent heat from chilling clouds
With drenching mist surcharged.

So suddenly

To bring this change upon her ! Cruel craft !
He knows that it will break her tender heart,
And serve his fatal purpose.

MONTEBESA.

Frantic man !

Thou art unjust, ungenerous, unwise ;
For should Rasinga — no uncommon act,
Take to his princely bower a second bride,
Would not Artina still be held in honour,
Her children cherish'd and their rank secured ?

SAMARKOON.

Such honour as unfeeling worldlings give

To fall'n deserted merit, she will have ;
 And such security as should-be heirs,
 Who stand i' the way of younger, petted minions,
 Find in the house of an estranged sire,
 Her children will receive. — Alas, alas !
 The very bonds of soul-devoted love,
 That did so long entwine a husband's heart,
 For her own life the cord of execution.
 Will surely prove. — Detested cruelty !
 But is it so ? My head is all confusion,
 My heart all fire ; — I know not what thou said'st.

MONTEBESA.

Indeed, young kinsman, thou art now unfit
 To hold discourse on such a wayward subject.
 She whom thou lov'st so dearly as a brother,
 I as a mother do most truly love.
 Let this suffice thee, and retire awhile,
 For I expect Artina, and 't is meet
 She be not now overwhelm'd with thy distress.
 Ha ! she is here already ; tripping lightly
 With sparkling eyes, like any happy child,
 Who bears away the new-robb'd rock-bird's spoil.

*Enter ARTINA, gayly, with an embroidered scarf
 of many colours in her hand, and running up to
 MONTEBESA.*

ARTINA.

Dear mother, look at this ! such tints, such
 flowers !

The spirits of the Peak have done this work ;
Not hands of flesh and blood.—Nay, look more
closely.

And thou too, Samarkoon. How cam'st thou
here ?

I pray you both admire the beauteous gift —
Rasinga's gift — which I have just received.

SAMARKOON (*eagerly*).

Received from his own hand, so lately too ?

ARTINA.

Ev'n now. But did I say, from his own hand ?
He sent it to me, the capricious man !

Ay, and another present, some days since,
Was also sent. — Ay, so it was, indeed.

SAMARKOON.

Was he not wont to bring such gifts himself ?

ARTINA.

With what a face of gravity thou ask'st
This most important question ! — Never mind :
I can devise a means to be revenged
For all this seeming lack of courtesy.

MONTEBESA.

Devise a means to be revenged ! and how ?

ARTINA.

I'll dress old nurse, as my ambassadress,
With robe and veil and pall majestic,
And she shall thank him in a tiresome speech,

(He hates her formal prosing) — that I trow,
Will cure him of such princely modes of sending
His gifts to me. — But ye are wondrous grave.
What ails thee, brother? Speak, good Montebesa ;
I fear he is not well.

MONTEBESA.

He is not very well.

ARTINA (*taking his hand affectionately*).
Indeed he is not.

SAMARKOON (*turning away his face*).
A passing fit of fever has disturb'd me,
But mind it not, Artina.

ARTINA.

Nay, nay, but I *will* mind it, gentle brother.
And I have learnt this morning cheering news, —
Good news for thee and all sick folk beside.

MONTEBESA.

We want good news; what is it thou hast heard?

ARTINA.

De Creda, who, by physic magical,
Did cure Rasinga of his fearful malady,
When at the point of death, is just arrived.
Where he hath been these two long year and
more

There's not a creature knows. Perhaps i' the
moon,
If magic knows the way to climb so high.

MONTEBESA.

Perhaps in his own land.

ARTINA.

Ay, certes, Europe is a wond'rous kingdom,
And well worth visiting, which sends forth men
So gifted and so good.

SAMARKOON.

I pray thee say not *men*, but only *man*.
Hath it e'er sent another like to him ?
Yet wherefore came he to these happier regions
With such a wicked crew ?

ARTINA.

Nay, blame him not :
His fate hath been disastrous and sad,
As I have heard him say ; and, woe is me !
Misfortune is not dainty in associates.

SAMARKOON.

Associates ! Solitude in trackless deserts,
Where locusts, ants, and lizards poorly thrive,—
On the bare summit of a rugged peak,
Where birds of prey in dusky circles wing
The troubled air with loud and clam'rous din,
Were to an honest heart endurable,
Rather than such associates.

ARTINA.

Ha ! does this rouse thee so ? Yet, ne'ertheless,
I'll send for him, and he will make thee well.

SAMARKOON.

I'm well if thou art so, my gentle sister.

ARTINA.

And I *am* so ; how canst thou doubt it, brother,
Being so loving and so well beloved.

SAMARKOON.

O yes ! thou art indeed beloved most dearly,
Both thee and thine, and so shall ever be,
Whilst life gives motion to thy brother's heart.

ARTINA.

A brother's heart ! — How so ? there is a mean-
ing, —

A meaning and a mystery in this.

Tears, too, are on my hand, dropt from thine
eyes ; —

O, speak, and tell the worst !

SAMARKOON.

I may not now.

I pray thee, let me go ; I cannot speak.

[Breaks from her and exit. Then SABAWATTE comes forward and takes hold of her robe with an action of soothing tenderness.]

ARTINA (*to SABAWATTE*).

Dost thou too look on me with pity ? — Speak ;
I charge thee speak, and tell the fearful cause,
Since no one else will do it.

MONTEBESA.

My dear Artina, thou shalt know the truth,
Which can no longer be concealed ; but listen,
Listen with patience to the previous story,
And thou wilt see how fated, strange events
Have caused within Rasinga's noble heart,
Ev'n he who has so long and dearly loved thee,
A growing possibility of change.

ARTINA.

If he is changed, why should I know the rest ?
All is comprised in this. (*With actions of
despair.*)

MONTEBESA.

Nay, do not wring thy hands, but listen to me.
Sit on this seat and call up strength to hear me.
Thou giv'st no heed to me ; thou dost not hear.

ARTINA (*in a low voice, after a pause*).

I'm faint and very cold ; mine ears ring
strangely ;

But I will try to do whate'er thou wilt. (*After
another pause.*)

There is a story then : I'll hear it now.

MONTEBESA.

Rasinga, as thou know'st, did, short while since,
A mountain chief and his fair daughter rescue
From ruffian robbers. In its youthful charms
He saw the virgin's unveil'd face. Alas!
A sight so rare he could not see unmoved.
Restless and troubled, like a stricken wretch
Whom sorcery possesses, for a while
He strove against his passion, but at length
Nature gave way; and thou may'st guess what
follows.

ARTINA.

What follows! — What has followed?

MONTEBESA.

Our gates must soon receive this youthful bride;
And thou, dear daughter, must prepare thyself
To bear some natural change.

[ARTINA *faints away in the arms of SABAWATTÉ.*]

SABAWATTÉ.

I knew it would be so! Oh, my dear mistress!
These cruel words have dealt the fatal blow.

MONTEBESA.

Be not afraid of this infirmity,
Which, though it seems appalling, brings relief,
Ev'n like Niwané, when the virtuous soul
Hath run, through many a change, its troubled
course.

Let us remove her gently to my couch.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Apartments of RASINGA.

*He enters, followed by EHLEYPOLIE and MIH-
DOONY, and is speaking as he enters.*

RASINGA (*to EHLEYPOLIE*).
Thou hast done well.

EHLEYPOLIE.
I am not given to boasting,
Yet I must say all things are so arranged,
That never bride's array, on such short notice,
Was better order'd, or for gallant show,
Or for security.

RASINGA.
'Tis rich and splendid?

EHLEYPOLIE.
Our palanquin, with all its colour'd streamers,
Will shine above the guard's encircling heads,
Like any crested mancka, proudly perch'd
Upon the summit of her bushy knoll.

RASINGA.
And have ye pioneers to clear its way?

EHLEYPOLIE.

Ay, pioneers who through a tangled thicket
Make room as quickly as the supple trunk
Of a wild elephant ; whilst forest birds,
From their rent haunts dislodged, fly up and
wheel
In mazy circles, raising clam'rous cries,
And casting noon-day shadows, like a cloud,
On the green woods beneath.

MIHDOONY.

In truth, my lord, he makes it well appear
He is not given to boasting.

RASINGA (*smiling*).

Not a whit !

As meek and modest as a Padur's child.
And having done so much for show and speed,
Good Ehleypoolie, I will take for granted
The chiefest point of all, *security*,
Has not been overlook'd ; for mountain robbers
May yet be lurking near some narrow pass.

EHLEYPOLIE.

Well, let them lurk, and burst upon us too ;
'T will be as though a troop of mowing monkeys,
With antic mimic motions of defiance,
Should front the brinded tiger and his brood.
Full soon, I trow, their hinder parts they turn,
Lank and unseemly, to the enemy,

In scamp'ring haste, to gain the nearest shelter.
It were good sport if they should dare to stand.

MIHDOONY.

You see, my lord, he is in all things perfect.

RASINGA.

I see it plainly. Thanks for all thy pains,
Brave Ehleypoolie.

EHLEYPOLIE.

Shall we take with us
The pipes and doulas* which have hung so long
In the recess of Dame Artina's garden?
Of all your instruments there are not any
That sound so loud and clear.

RASINGA (*sternly*).

No, no! I charge thee,
Let nothing there be changed. Thy witless words
Have struck upon my heart a dismal note,
Depressing all its life and buoyancy.
Alas! my joy is like the shimm'ring brightness
Of moving waves, touch'd by the half-risen moon,
Tracing her narrow pathway on the deep:
Between each brighten'd ridge black darkness
lies,

Whilst far on either side, the wat'ry waste
Spreads dim, and vague, and cheerless.

* Doulas, a kind of drums, beat on one end by the hand
and on the other with a stick.

MIHDOONY.

If such thy thoughts, dost thou repent thy purpose?

RASINGA.

Not so; there's ecstasy in those bright gleams;
Ay, and though cross'd with darkness black as
midnight,
I will enjoy this momentary radiance.

Enter a Slave, in haste.

What brings thee here with such a staring face?

SLAVE.

The lady's coming; she is close at hand.

RASINGA.

Ha! from her father's house, unsent for, come?

SLAVE.

No, not that lady, Sir; it is Artina.

RASINGA (*much disturbed*).

I thought my mother would have spared me this.
Is Montebesa with her?

SLAVE.

No, my lord;
She has her children with her.

RASINGA.

Wretched moment!

The sight of them will change my strength to
cowardice :
What shall I do ?

EHLEYPOLIE.

I'll quickly run and say that you are busy,
And cannot see her.

RASINGA (*pulling EHLEYPOLIE back as he is
about to go out.*)

Restrain thy heartless zeal ; it is most odious.
Shall she be so debarr'd from entrance here,
Whose presence was a blessing and a grace !

*Enter ARTINA, leading her youngest Child, and
followed by SAMAR, leading his little sister.
RASINGA hastens to meet her, and leads her in
silence to the principal seat, at the same time
motioning to EHLEYPOLIE and MIHDOONY to
withdraw, who immediately leave the apart-
ment.*

Here, take this seat, Artina.

ARTINA.

No, my lord ;
I come not here to sit ; I come to kneel,
As now beseems a scorn'd forsaken wife,
Who pleads with strong affection for her chil-
dren :
Who pleads in painful memory of love

Which thou for many years hast lavish'd on her,
Till, in the gladness of a foolish heart,
She did believe that she was worthy of it.

RASINGA.

Yes, dear Artina, thou wert worthy of it !
Thou wert, and art, and shalt be loved and
honour'd
While there is life within Rasinga's bosom.
Why didst thou think it could be otherwise,
Although another mate within my house
May take her place, to be with thee associated,
As younger sister with an elder born ?
Such union is in many houses found.

ARTINA.

I have no skill in words — no power to reason :
How others live I little care to know :
But this I feel, there is no life for me,
No love, no honour, if thy alter'd heart
Hath put me from it for another mate.
Oh, woe is me ! these children on thy knees,
That were so oft caress'd, so dearly cherish'd,
Must then divide thy love with younger fav'rites,
Of younger mother born ? Alas ! alas !
Small will the portion be that falls to them.

RASINGA.

Nay, say not so, Artina ; say not so.

ARTINA.

I know it well. Thou thinkest now, belike,
That thou wilt love them still ; but ah ! too soon
They'll be as things who do but haunt thy house,
Lacking another home, uncheer'd, uncared for.
And who will heed their wants, will sooth their
sorrow,

When their poor mother moulders in the grave,
And her vex'd spirit, in some other form,
Is on its way to gain the dreamless sleep ?
Kneel, Samar, kneel ! thy father loved thee first,
In our first happy days. — Wilt thou not, boy ?
Why dost thou stand so sullen and so still ?

SAMAR.

He loves us not.

ARTINA.

Nay, nay, but he will love us.
Down on thy knees ! up with thy clasped hands !
Rasinga, O Rasinga ! did I think
So to implore thy pity — me and mine
So to implore thy pity, and in vain !
(Sinks on the ground exhausted with agitation.)

RASINGA *(raising her gently in his arms)*.

Dearest Artina ! still most dear to me :
Thy passionate affections waste thy strength ;
Let me support thee to another chamber,
More fitting for retirement and for rest.
Come also, children.—Come, my little playmates!

SAMAR.

We're not thy playmates now.

RASINGA.

What dost thou say ?

SAMAR.

Thou dost not speak and smile and sport with us
As thou were wont : we're not thy playmates
now.

RASINGA.

Thou art a fearless knave to tell me so.

*[Exeunt ARTINA, leaning on her husband,
and the children following.]*

SCENE IV.

A retired Grove near the Castle of Rasinga.

Enter SAMARKOON and a Forest Freebooter.

SAMARKOON.

Now, stop we here ; in this sequester'd spot,
We may with freedom commune on the purpose
For which I would engage thy speedy aid.
Thou knowest who I am ; and dost remember
Where, how, and when I last encounter'd thee ?

FREEBOOTER.

I do, my lord ; but though thou find'st me thus,

Alone and slightly arm'd, be well assured
I will defend my life and liberty,
Against thyself (*looking suspiciously around*) or
any ambush'd band
To the last bloody push of desperation.

SAMARKOON.

I know thou wilt; it is thy desp'rate prowess
Which makes me now, all robber as thou art,
And lurking here disguised, as well I guess,
For no good end, — to seek thy amity.

FREEBOOTER.

My amity! the noble Samarkoon —
A chief of rank, and brother of Rasinga!

SAMARKOON.

Strong passion by strong provocation roused,
Is not a scrup'lous chooser of its means.
How many of these armed desperadoes,
From whose fell hands we did so lately rescue
That petty chieftain and his child, could'st thou
Within short time assemble?

FREEBOOTER.

Few remain
Of those who once, at call of my shrill horn,
With spear and bow in hand, and quiver'd back
The deadly arrows bearing, issued forth
From cave or woody jungle, fierce but stealthy,
Like glaring, tawny pards, — few, few remain.

SAMARKOON.

But some remain ?

FREEBOOTER.

Ay, some.

SAMARKOON.

And they are brave ?

FREEBOOTER.

No braver bandits e'er in deadly strife
With man or tiger grappled.

SAMARKOON.

Enough ! hie quickly to thy forest haunts,
And near the narrow pass where ye sustain'd
The onset of Rasinga, wait my coming
With all the armed mates thou canst assemble ;
And there I'll join thee with a trusty band.
Do this, and thou shalt be rewarded richly.

FREEBOOTER.

I will ; nor do I doubt the recompense
From such a noble chief will be most bountiful.

SAMARKOON.

Tis well ; be speedy, secret, faithful, — brave,
I need not say. So let us separate,
Nor stay for further parley ; time is precious.

FREEBOOTER.

I will but go to leave an offering
At the Wiharé yonder ; then with speed

Wend to our woods. — But wherefore smilest thou?

SAMARKOON.

Dost thou regard such duties?

FREEBOOTER.

Ay, good sooth!
Who has more need of favour from the gods
Than he who leads a life of lawless peril?

[*Exit.*

SAMARKOON (*exultingly*).

Ay, now, Rasinga, set thy costly chamber,
While poor Artina sighs and weeps unheeded,
In gallant order for thy fair new bride!
Another bridegroom and another chamber
Abide her which thou little thinkest of.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.— *The Castle of Samarkoon. Loud shouting heard without.*

Enter several Domestics in confusion.

FIRST DOMESTIC.

What shouts are those ? do enemies approach ?
What can we do in our brave master's absence ?

SECOND DOMESTIC.

Ha ! hear it now ! it is no enemy ;
It is our lord himself ; I know the sound.
And lo ! his messenger arrived with tidings.

Enter a Messenger.

What are thy news ?

MESSENGER.

Right joyful news, I warrant.
Our master brings a bride, by conquest won,
To be the bliss and sunshine of his house ;
A bride fair as the goddess, bright Patiné.

FIRST DOMESTIC.

Most unexpected tidings ! Won by conquest ?

SECOND DOMESTIC.

With whom has he been fighting for such
prize ?

MESSENGER.

Fy, fy ! despatch and make such preparation
As may be fitting for a bride's reception :
There is no time for telling stories now.
Despatch, I say ; do ye not hear them nearer ?
They are not many furlongs from the gate.
[*Exeunt in haste, different ways.*]

SCENE II.

The Hall or principal Room of the Castle.

*Enter SAMARKOON leading in a Lady covered
with a veil, and followed by two Female At-
tendants ; then a band of Musicians and a
train of armed Men, with EHLEYPOLIE and
several of his Soldiers as prisoners. A Nup-
tial Chaunt or Song is struck up.*

SONG.

Open wide the frontal gate,
The lady comes in bridal state ;
Than wafted spices sweeter far,
Brighter than the morning star ;

Modest as the lily wild,
Gentle as a nurse's child.
A lovelier prize, of prouder boast,
Never chieftain's threshold crost.

Like the beams of early day,
Her eyes' quick flashes brightly play ;
Brightly play and gladden all
On whom their kindly glances fall.
Her lips in smiling weave a charm
To keep the peopled house from harm.
In happy moment is she come
To bless a noble chieftain's home.

Happy be her dwelling here,
Many a day and month and year !
Happy as the nested dove
In her fruitful ark of love !
Happy in her tented screen !
Happy in her garden green !
Thus we welcome, one and all,
Our lady to her chieftain's hall.

SAMARKOON.

I give ye all large thanks, my valiant warriors,
For the good service ye have done to me
Upon this day of happy fate. Ere long,
This gentle lady too, I trust, will thank you,
Albeit her present tears and alter'd state
Have made her shrink and droop in cheerless
silence.

An ample recompense ye well have won,
Which shall not with a sparing hand be dealt.
Meantime, partake our cheer and revelry ;

And let the wounded have attendance due ;
 Let sorcery and med'cine combine
 To mitigate their pain. (*Turning to the Prisoners.*)

Nay, Ehleypoolie,
 Why from beneath those low'ring brows dost
 thou

Cast on the ground such wan and wither'd looks ?
 Thy martial enterprise fell somewhat short
 Of thy predictions and thy master's pleasure ;
 But thou and all thy band have bravely fought,
 And no disgrace is coupled with your failure.

EHLEYPOLIE.

Had not my amulets from this right arm
 Been at the onset torn, ev'n ambush'd foes
 Had not so master'd us.

SAMARKOON.

Well, be it so ; good amulets hereafter
 Thou may'st secure, and fight with better luck.

EHLEYPOLIE.

Ay, luck was on your side, good sooth ! such
 luck
 As fiends and magic give. Another time ——

SAMARKOON.

What thou wilt do another time, at present
 We have no time to learn.

(*To his followers generally.*)

Go where cool sparkling cups and sav'ry viands

Will wasted strength recruit, and cheer your
hearts.

Ere long I'll join you at the board, and fill
A hearty cup of health and thanks to all.

*[Exeunt all but SAMARKOON, the BRIDE,
and her Female Attendants.]*

And now, dear maid, thou pearl and gem of
beauty,

The prize for which this bloody fray was fought,
Wilt thou forgive a youthful lover's boldness,
And the rude outrage by his love committed?
Wilt thou not speak to me?

BRIDE.

What can I say?

I was the destined bride of great Rasinga;
My father told me so.

SAMARKOON.

But did thy heart —
Did thine own heart, sweet maid, repeat the
tale?

And did it say to thee, "The elder chieftain
Is he whom I approve; his younger rival
Unworthy of my choice?"

BRIDE.

My choice! a modest virgin hath no choice.
That I have seen you both; that both have seen
My unveil'd face, alas! is my dishonour,
Albeit most innocent of such exposure.

SAMARKOON.

Say not dishonour ; innocence is honour,
And thou art innocent and therefore honourable,
Though every slave and spearman of our train
Had gazed upon thy face. The morning star
Receives no taint for that a thousand eyes,
All heavenward turn'd, admire its lovely brightness.

Let me again look in thy dark soft eyes,
And read my pardon in one beamy smile.
*(Attempting to draw aside her veil, while she
gathers it the closer.)*

BRIDE.

Forbear, forbear ! this is indignity.

SAMARKOON.

And this, dear maid, is childish bashfulness.
*[The upper fastening of the veil gives way
and falls over her hand.]*
And look, the silly fence drops of itself ;
An omen of good fortune to my love.
Oh ! while those eyes are fixed upon the ground,
Defended from too ardent admiration,
With patience hear my suit. — Two rival chiefs
Have look'd upon thy face, and thou perforce
Must choose or one or other for thy husband.
Rasinga, in his rich and noble mansion,
Hath years already pass'd in wedded love ;
And is the husband of a virtuous dame,
Whose faithful heart, in giving place to thee,

Will be asunder torn. My house is humble ;
No gay and costly treasures deck its walls ;
But I am young, unmarried, and my heart
Shall be thine own, whilst thou reign'st mistress
here,

As shares the lion's mate his forest cave,
In proud equality. Thou smilest at this ;
And it doth please thy fancy ; — yea, a tear
Falls on that smiling cheek : yes, thou art mine.

BRIDE.

Too quickly dost thou scan a passing thought.

SAMARKOON.

Thanks, thanks ! O, take my thanks for such dear
words !

And speak them yet again with that sweet voice
Which makes my heart dance in its glowing cell.

FIRST ATTENDANT (*advancing to SAMARKOON*).
My lady is forspent with all this coil ;
She has much need of quiet repose. I pray,
On her behalf, let this be granted to her.

BRIDE (*to First Attendant*).

I thank thee, nurse ! (*To SAMARKOON.*) My
lord, I would retire.

SAMARKOON.

I will retire, or do whate'er thou wilt.
Thy word or wish commands myself and mine.

[*Exit.*

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Thyself and thine ! a mighty rich dominion !
A-lack, a-lack-a-day, the woeful change !
This rude unfurnish'd tower for the fair mansion
Of great Rasinga ! Evil was the hour
When those fell demons stopped us on our way.

BRIDE.

O, say not so ! in great Rasinga's house
A noble wife already holds her state,
And here I shall have no divided pleasure.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Divided ! Doth an elder faded wife
In love, in honour, or in riches share
Like portion with a youthful beauty ? No !
She doth herself become the flatt'ring subject
Of her through whom the husband's favours
 flow ;
And thereby doth increase her rival's power,
Her state and dignity.
Thou art a simple child, and hast no sense
Of happiness or honour. Woe the day
When those fell demons stopp'd our high career !

BRIDE.

But for my father's anger, and the blood
Which has been shed in this untoward fray,
The day were one of joy and not of woe,
In my poor estimation.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Poor, indeed !

SECOND ATTENDANT (*advancing*).

Fy, nurse ! how canst thou so forget thyself?
Thy words are rude ; my lady is offended.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Who would not, so provoked, forget herself?
Ah ! the rich treasures of Rasinga's palace !
His gaudy slaves, his splendid palanquins !
They have pass'd from us like a mummer's show,
Seen for an hour and gone.

Enter a Female Domestic.

DOMESTIC.

My master bids me say, the lady's chamber
Is now in readiness. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Court of the Castle.

Enter Two Domestics, meeting.

FIRST DOMESTIC.

The merry revelry continues still
As if but just begun, though Samarkoon

Reminds them anxiously, that preparation
For the defence of this neglected hold,
Is pressing matter of necessity.

SECOND DOMESTIC.

Those glutton bandits will not leave a board,
On which good viands smoke or wine cups
sparkle,
For all the words of threat'ning or entreaty,
That mortal tongue can utter.

Enter a Third Domestic in great alarm.

THIRD DOMESTIC.

Where is our master?

FIRST DOMESTIC.

What alarms thee so?

THIRD DOMESTIC.

There is a power of armed men advancing.
I saw their dark heads winding through the pass
Above the bushes shown; a lengthen'd line,
Two hundred strong, I guess.

FIRST DOMESTIC.

It is Rasinga.

SECOND DOMESTIC.

Ring the larum bell,
And rouse those drunken thieves from their de-
bauch.

THIRD DOMESTIC.

But I must find our master ; where is he ?

FIRST DOMESTIC.

He was i' th' inner court some minutes since.

[The larum bell is rung, and many people in confusion cross the Stage as the scene closes.]

SCENE IV.

*An Open Space before the Gate of the Castle ;
Armed Men are discovered on the Walls.*

Enter RASINGA and his Force.

RASINGA (*to those on the walls*).

Where is that villain whom ye call your lord ?
Let him appear, and say, why, like a robber, —
A reckless, lawless traitor, he hath dared
My servants to attack, my bride to capture,
And do most foul dishonour to my state.
Am I a driv'ling fool, — a nerveless stripling, —
A widow'd ranny, propping infants' rights,
That thus he reckons with impunity
To pour on me such outrage ?

*Enter SAMARKOON above, and stands on the wall
over the Gate.*

SAMARKOON.

Rasinga, thou art robb'd and thou art wrong'd,
And hast good cause to utter stormy words.

RASINGA.

Ay, and good cause to back those stormy words
With stormy blows, which soon shall force that
gate,

Make desp'rate entrance through the rifted walls,
And leave within your paltry tower, of all
Who dare oppose my arms, no living thing,
Unless thou do restore the mountain beauty,
And all the spoil thou hast so basely won.

SAMARKOON.

Though I have dared to wrong thee, brave
Rasinga,

I've done it in the heat and agony
Of passions that, within a generous breast,
Are irresistible, and, be assured,
With no weak calculations of impunity.
The living treasure I have robbed thee of
I will defend to the extremity
Of desp'rate effort, ev'n in this poor hold,
Mann'd as it is. — I well might speak to thee
Of equal claims to that fair beauty's favour ;
Of secret love ; of strong fraternal sympathy

With her whose honour'd name I will not utter ;
But that were vain.

RASINGA.

Vain as a sea-bird's screams,
To check the wind-scourged ocean's rising bil-
lows :

So far thou speakest wisely. — Stern defiance
I cast to thee ; receive it as thou may'st,
Audacious traitor !

SAMARKOON.

And I to thee do cast it back again
With words and heart as dauntless as thine own.

RASINGA (*to his followers*).

Here ends our waste of breath and waste of time.
On, pioneers, and let your pond'rous mallets
Break down the gate. To it, my valiant bow-
men !

Discharge a shower of arrows on that wall,
And clear it of yon load of miscreant life,

[RASINGA's followers raise a shout, which is
answered by one equally loud from the ad-
verse party, and the attack commences.
After great efforts of attack and defence,
the gate is at last forced, and RASINGA,
with his force, enters the castle. The
Scene then closes.]

SCENE V.

A wild Mountain Pass, with a bridge swung from one high perpendicular rock to another. The course of a small stream, with its herby margin, seen beneath. Martial music is heard, and a military procession seen at some distance, winding among the rocks, and at length crossing the bridge. Then come the followers of RASINGA in triumph, leading SAMARKOON in chains, followed by men bearing a palanquin, and in the rear RASINGA himself, with his principal officers. As he is on the middle of the bridge JUAN DE CREDa enters below, and calls to him with a loud voice.

JUAN.

Rasinga, ho! thou noble chief, Rasinga!

RASINGA (*above*).

Who calls on me?

JUAN.

Dost thou not know my voice?

RASINGA.

Juan de Creda, is it thou indeed?

Why do I find thee here?

JUAN.

Because the Power that rules o'er heaven and
earth
Hath laid its high commission on my soul
Here to arrest thee on thy fatal way.

RASINGA.

What means such solemn words ?

JUAN.

Descend to me, and thou shalt know their mean-
ing.

[RASINGA crosses the bridge and re-appears
below.]

RASINGA.

I have obey'd thee, and do bid thee welcome
To this fair land again.—But thou shrink'st back,
Casting on me looks of upbraiding sorrow :
With thee I may not lordly rights assert ;
What is thy pleasure ?

JUAN.

Is he, the prisoner now led before thee,
Loaded with chains, like a vile criminal,
Is he the noble Samarkoon, thy brother ?

RASINGA.

Miscall not by such names that fetter'd villain :
He, who once wore them with fair specious
seeming,
Is now extinct to honour, base and treacherous.

The vilest carcase, trampled under foot
Of pond'rous elephant, for lawless deeds,
Was ne'er inhabited by soul more worthless.

JUAN.

Thy bitter wrath ascribes to his offence
A ten-fold turpitude. Suspect thy judgment.
When two days' thought has communed with
thy conscience,
Of all the strong temptations which beset
Unwary youth by potent passions urged,
Thou wilt not pass on him so harsh a censure.

RASINGA.

When two days' thought ! If that he be alive,
And wear a human semblance two days hence,
In the fell serpent's folds, the tiger's paws,
Or earthquake's pitchy crevice, with like speed,
Be my abhorred end !

JUAN.

Hold, hold, Rasinga !
The God, in whose high keeping is the fate
Of every mortal man, or prince or slave,
Hath this behest declared, — that sinful man
Should pardon grant to a repentant brother ;
Yea, more than this, — to his repentant enemies.
So God commands ; and wilt thou prove rebel-
lious ?

RASINGA.

Ha ! hast thou been in heaven since last we met,

To bring from hence this precious message?
Truly
Thou speak'st as if thou hadst.

JUAN.

No, I have found it in my native land,
Within the pages of a sacred book
Which I and my compatriots do believe
Contains the high revealed will of God.

RASINGA.

Ha! then those Europeans, whom the sea
Hath cast like fiends upon our eastern shores,
To wrong and spoil and steep the soil with
blood,
Are not compatriots of thy book-taught land.
What! dost thou cast thine eyes upon the
ground?
The stain of rushing blood is on thy cheek.
If they be so, methinks they have obey'd
That heavenly message sparingly. — Go to!
Tell me no more of this fantastic virtue, —
This mercy and forgiveness. Ev'n a woman,
A child, a simpleton would laugh to scorn
Such strange unnatural duty.

JUAN.

Call it not so till I have told thee further —
(Taking his hand.)

RASINGA.

Detain me not. But that to thee I owe

My life from fatal sickness rescued, — dearly,
Full dearly should'st thou pay for such pre-
sumption.
Let go thy hold.

JUAN.

I will not till thou promise,
Before thy vengeful purpose is effected,
To see me once again.

RASINGA.

I promise then, thou proud and dauntless
stranger ;
For benefits are traced in my remembrance
With lines as ineffaceable as wrongs. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

*The House of MONTEBESA ; who enters, meeting
a Servant from the opposite side.*

MONTEBESA.

What com'st thou to impart? thy busy face
Is full of mingled meaning, grief and gladness.

SERVANT.

My Lord Rasinga, madam, is returned, —
Return'd victorious ; and the fair young bride
Again is rescued by his matchless valour.

MONTEBESA.

All this is good ; hast thou no more to tell ?

SERVANT.

Alas ! I have ; for, by his spearmen guarded,
Loaded with chains, most rueful to behold,
Comes Samarkoon. For now it doth appear,
That he, enleagued with robbers, was the spoiler,
Who beat the gallant train of Ehleypoolie,
And bore away their prize.

MONTEBESA.

Oh, this is dreadful ! Clouds o'erlapping clouds
Are weaving o'er our house an evil woof, —
A fearful canopy. It was to us
That ominous sign was sent, but few days past,
When Boodhoo's rays, beneath the noon's blue
dome
With shiv'ring motion gleam'd in streaky bright-
ness,
Surpassing mid-day splendour. Woe is me !
I saw it not unmoved ; but little thought,
Ah ! little thought of misery like this.

Enter JUAN DE CREDÁ.

Welcome, De Creda ; thou in hour of need
Art ever wise and helpful. Dost thou know
Of this most strange event ? Of Samarkoon
As lawless spoiler by Rasinga conquer'd,
And led —

JUAN.

I do ; and come to entreat thee, lady,
That thou with thy enchafed and vengeful son
May'st use a mother's influence to save him.

MONTEBESA.

Entreaties are not wanted, good De Creda,
For herein I am zealous as thyself.

JUAN.

He must not die.

MONTEBESA.

Nor shall, if I can save him.

JUAN.

Then let us meet Rasinga, as he passes,
Ere he can reach the shelter of his chamber,
Where men are wont to cherish moody wrath ;
And we will so beset him with our prayers,
That we shall move his soul, if it be possible.
The fair Artina too must come with us
To beg her brother's life.

MONTEBESA.

Yes, be it so ; but first let us apprise her,
And do it warily, lest sudden grief
O'erwhelm her totally.

JUAN.

That will be necessary.
And, lady, let us find her instantly ;
We have no time to spare. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

A Gallery or Passage leading to RASINGA'S Chamber.

Enter RASINGA, speaking to an Officer who follows him.

RASINGA.

And let his dungeon be secured to the utmost
With bolt and bars ; and set a double guard
To watch the entry. Make it sure, I say :
For if thy prisoner escape, thy life
Shall pay the forfeit. 'This thou knowest well,
Therefore be vigilant. *[Exit Officer.*
The very blood is boiling in my veins,
Whilst the audacious braver of my rights,
My arms, my honour, ev'n within a dungeon
And manacled with iron, breathes vital air.

Enter MONTEBESA by the farther end of the Gallery, followed by ARTINA and JUAN DE CREDÁ, who remain without advancing further, whilst she approaches her Son with an air of dignity.

MONTEBESA.

Rasinga, let a mother, who rejoices

In every victory thy arms achieve,
Be it o'er foreign, yea, or kindred foe,
Greet thee right heartily.

RASINGA.

I thank you, lady.

MONTEBESA.

But that my pride in thee may be unmix'd
With any sense of aught to taint thy glory,
Grant me a boon that will enhance thy triumph,
And make me say, with full, elated heart,
Rasinga is my son.

RASINGA.

Name it ; whate'er a man may grant is thine.

MONTEBESA.

The life of Samarkoon ; that is my boon.

RASINGA.

The life of Samarkoon ! then thou dost ask
The foul disgrace and ruin of thy son.

MONTEBESA.

Not so ; for thine own peace and future weal,
I do adjure thee to be merciful.

RASINGA.

And would'st thou see the son whom thou didst
bear

An unrevenged, despised, derided man ?

And have I got from thee and my brave sire

This manly stature and these hands of strength
To play an idiot's or a woman's part?
If such indeed be Montebesa's wish,
Poor slight-boned, puny, shambling drivellers,
Or sickly maidens, should have been the off-
spring
Produced by her to mock a noble house.

MONTEBESA.

O say not so! there will be no dishonour.

RASINGA.

What! no dishonour in the mocking lips,
And pointing fingers of the meanest peasant,
Who would his whetted blade sheath in the heart
Of his own mother's son for half the wrong, —
Ay, half the wrong which that audacious traitor
Has done to me! — Cease, lady; say no more:
I cannot henceforth live in ignominy;
Therefore, good sooth! I cannot grant your
boon.

ARTINA (*rushing forward and catching hold of
his hand and his garments*).

Dear, dear Rasinga! wilt thou make my life
One load of wretchedness? Thou'st cast me
off, —

I who so loved thee and love thee still, —
Thou'st cast me off, and I will meekly bear it.
Then, wilt thou not make some amends to me,

In a saved brother's life, for all the tears,
The bitter tears and anguish this has caused me ?

RASINGA (*shaking her off*).

Thy plea is also vain ; away, away !
Thy tears and anguish had been better comforted,

Had he a more successful spoiler proved.

[*Turning fiercely on JUAN DE CREDa, who now advances.*]

Ha ! thou too art upon me ! Thou whose kindred

And colleagues are of those who read good lore,
And speak like holy saints, and act like fiends.

By my brave father's soul, where'er it be,
Thou art a seemly suitor for such favour !

[*Bursts away from them and exit.*]

ARTINA.

De Creda, good De Creda, dear De Creda !
Wilt thou not follow him ?

JUAN.

Not now ; it were in vain ; I might as well,
While wreck of unroof'd cots and forest boughs,
And sand and rooted herbage whirl aloft,
Dark'ning the sky, bid the outrageous hurricane
Spare a rock-crested palm. — But yet despair
not ;

I'll find a season. Let me lead thee hence.

MONTEBESA.

I fear the fierceness of his untamed spirit
Will never yield until it be too late ;
And then he will, in brooding, vain repentance,
The more relentless be to future criminals ;
As though the death of one he should have
spared
Made it injustice e'er to spare another.
I know his dangerous nature all too well.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.

A Prison.

SAMARKOON *is discovered in chains ; a lamp burning on the ground near him, and a pitcher of water by it.*

SAMARKOON.

And now the close of this my present being,
With all its hopes, its happiness, and pain,
Is near at hand, — a violent bloody close,
Perhaps with added torture and disgrace.
Oh, Kattragam, terrific deity !
Thy stern decrees have compass'd all this misery.
Short, turbulent, and changeful and disastrous,
Hath been this stage of my existence. What,
When this is past, abides me in my progress .

To the still blessing of unvision'd rest,
Who may imagine or conjecture? — Blessing!
Alas! it is a dull unjoyous blessing
To lose, with consciousness of pain, all conscious-
ness :

The pleasure of sweet sounds and beauteous
sights.

Bride, sister, friends,— all vanish'd and extinct,
That stilly, endless rest may be unbroken.

Oh, oh! he is a miserable man,
Who covets such a blessing! — Hush, bad
thoughts!

Rebellious, faithless thoughts! My misery
Is deep enough to make ev'n this a blessing.

Enter ARTINA.

It cannot be! is it some fantasy?
Who and what art thou?

ARTINA (*approaching him softly*).
The thing I seem; thy miserable sister.

SAMARKOON.
My gen'rous, loving sister, in her love
Running such fearful risk to comfort me.

ARTINA.
Nay, more than this, dear brother; more than
comfort;
I come to set thee free.

SAMARKOON.

Has he relented ?

ARTINA.

No, no ! Rasinga is most ruthless. I,
By means of this (*showing a signet*), which, in
our better days,
It was my privilege to use at will,
Have pass'd the guards, and may a short while
hence
By the same means return,— return in safety.
Meantime let me undo those galling fetters ;
I've brought fit tools, and thou shalt teach me
how.

SAMARKOON.

But canst thou think the guards will let thee
pass,
Ev'n with thy signet, leading a companion ?
It cannot be ; thou dost deceive thyself ;
Thy mis'ry and affection make thee foolish.

ARTINA.

Not so ; there is a secret passage yonder.
That stone (*pointing to it*) like many others in the
wall,
But rougher still (*goes close to the stone and
touches it*), look at it ! take good heed,
Has in its core a groove on which it turns :
A man's full strength will move it, and despair
Will make thee strong.

SAMARKOON.

Were two men's strength required, I feel within
me

The means for such deliverance ; if, indeed,
Thou hast not been deceived by some false tale.

ARTINA.

I'm not deceived. But wait, when I am gone,
With limbs yet seemingly enthrall'd, until
The wary guard hath come to ascertain
Thy presence here ; and then, when he re-
tires,——

Thou know'st the rest.— Haste, let me loose thy
shackles.

Is this the way ?

*(Kneeling down and using her implements
for breaking the chains, which she draws
from the folds of her robe.)*

SAMARKOON.

Well done, my most incomparable sister !
Affection seems to teach thee craftsman's skill.

ARTINA.

This link is broken.

SAMARKOON.

So it is indeed.

If I am fated yet to live on earth,
A prosp'rous man, I 'll have thy figure graven,
As now thou art, with implements in hand,
And make of it a tutelary idol.

ARTINA (*still working at the chains*).

Ha ! thou speak'st cheerly now ; and thy changed
voice

Is a good omen. Dost thou not remember
How once in play I bound thy stripling limbs
With braided reeds, as a mock criminal ?
We little thought—— Another link is conquer'd ;
And one alone remains. (*Tries to unloose it.*)

But it is stubborn.

Oh, if that I should now lack needed strength !
Vile, hateful link, give way !

*Enter RASINGA, and she starts up, letting fall her
tools on the ground.*

RASINGA.

And thou art here, thou most rebellious woman !
A faithful spy had given me notice of it,
And yet, methought, it was impossible
Thou could'st be so rebellious, so bereft
Of female honour, matronly allegiance.

ARTINA.

Upbraid me not, my lord ; I 've at your feet
Implored you to relent and spare his life,
The last shoot of my father's honour'd house.
But thou, with unrelenting tyranny,
Hast chid me from thee. — Matronly allegiance,
Ev'n in a favour'd and beloved wife,

O'errules not every duty ; and to her,
Who is despised, abandon'd, and disgraced,
Can it be more imperious ? No, Rasinga ;
I were unmeet to wear a woman's form,
If, with the means to save my brother's life,
Not implicating thine, I had, from fear
Of thy displeasure, grievous as it is,
Forborne to use them.

RASINGA.

Ha ! such bold words to justify the act,
Making rebellion virtue ! Such audacity
Calls for the punishment which law provides
For faithless and for disobedient wives.

SAMARKOON.

Rasinga, if that shameful threat be serious,
Thou art the fellest, fiercest, meanest tyrant,
That e'er joined human form to demon's spirit.

RASINGA.

And dost thou also front me with a storm
Of loud injurious clamour ? — Ho, without !
(*Calling aloud.*)

I came not here to hold a wordy war
With criminals and women. — Ho ! I say.

Enter Guards.

Secure the prisoner, and fasten tightly

His unlock'd chains.—And, lady, come thou instantly,
To such enthrallment as becomes thy crime.

[Exeunt RASINGA and ARTINA, who is led off by Guards, while motioning her last farewell to SAMARKOON. The scene closes.]

SCENE IX.

An Apartment in the House of MONTEBESA.

SAMAR is discovered playing on the floor with toys, and SABAWATTÉ sitting by him.

SAMAR (*holding up a toy*).
This is the prettiest plaything of them all :
I will not use it till my mother come,
That she may see it fresh and beautiful.

SABAWATTÉ.
Alas, sweet Samar ! would that she were here !

SAMAR.
Will she not soon ? how long she stays away !
And she has been so kind to me of late.

SABAWATTÉ.
Was she not always kind ?

SAMAR.
Yes, always very kind ; but since my father

Has thought of that new bride — I hate that
bride —

And spoken to me seldom and with looks
Not like his wonted looks, she has been kinder ;
Has kiss'd me oftener, and has held me closer
To her soft bosom. O she loves me dearly !
And dearly I love her ! — Where is she now,
That thou should'st say, " I would that she were
here ! "

SABAWATTÉ.

Dear boy ! I may not tell thee.

SAMAR.

May not tell me !
Then she is in some sad and hateful place,
And I will go to her.

SABAWATTÉ.

Ah no ! thou canst not.

SAMAR.

I will ; what shall withhold me, Sabawatté ?

SABAWATTÉ.

Strong bolts and bars, dear child !

SAMAR.

Is she in prison ?

SABAWATTÉ.

She is.

SAMAR.

And who hath dared to put her there?

SABAWATTÉ.

Thy father.

SAMAR.

Then he is a wicked man,
Most cruel and most wicked.
I'll stay no longer here ; I'll go to her ;
And if through bolts and bars I may not pass,
I at her door will live, as my poor dog
Close by my threshold lies and pines and moans,
When he's shut out from me.—I needs must go ;
Rooms are too good for me when she's in prison.
Come, lead me to the place ; I charge thee, do ;
I'll stay no longer here.

*Enter MONTEBESA, and he runs to her, clasping
her knees, and bursting into tears.*

MONTEBESA.

What is the matter with thee, my dear child?
(*To SABAWATTÉ.*) Does he know aught?

SABAWATTÉ.

I could not keep it from him.

SAMAR.

I know it all ; I know it all, good grand-dame.
O take me to her ! take me to her prison.

I'll be with her ; I'll be and bide with her ;
No other place shall hold me.

MONTEBESA.

Be pacified, dear child ! be pacified,
And I myself will take thee to thy mother :
The guards will not refuse to let me pass.
Weep not so bitterly, my own dear Samar !
Fy ! wipe away those tears and come with me.

SABAWATTÉ.

A blessing on you, madam, for this goodness !
It had been cruelty to keep him here.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Private Chamber of RASINGA,
who is discovered walking backwards and for-
wards in great agitation.*

RASINGA.

That I — that I alone must be restrain'd !
The very meanest chief who holds a mansion
May therein take his pleasure with a second,
When that his earlier wife begins to fade,
Or that his wearied heart longs for another.

Ay, this may be ; but I am deem'd a slave,
A tamed — a woman-bound — a simple fool.

(After a pause.)

Nor did I seek for it ; fate was my tempter.
That face of beauty was by fate unveil'd ;
And I must needs forbear to look upon it,
Or looking, must forbear to love. — Bold traitor !
That he should also, in that very moment,
Catch the bright glimpse and dare to be my
rival !

Fy, fy ! His jealous sister set him on.

Why is my mind so rack'd and rent with this ?
Jealous, rebellious, spiteful, as she is,
I need not, will not look upon her punishment.
Beneath the wat'ry gleam one moment's struggle, —

No more but this. *(Tossing his arms in agony.)*

Oh, oh ! there was a time,
A time but shortly past, when such a thought
Had been — the cords of life had snapt
asunder

At such a thought. — And it must come to this !

(After another perturbed pause.)

It needs must be : I'm driven to the brink.

What is a woman's life, or any life

That poisons his repose for whom it flourish'd ?

I would have cherish'd, honour'd her, yet she,

Rejecting all, has ev'n to this extremity —

No, no ! it is that hateful fiend, her brother,

Who for his damn'd desires and my dishonour

Hath urged her on.—The blood from his shorn
trunk

Shall to mine eyes be as the gushing fount
To the parch'd pilgrim — Blood! but that his
rank

Forbids such execution, his marr'd carcase,
A trampled mass — a spectacle of horror,
Should —— the detested traitor!

[*Noise at the door.*]

Who is there?

JUAN DE CREDÁ (*without*).

Juan de Credá: pray undo thy door.

RASINGA.

No, not to thee; not ev'n to thee, De Credá.

JUAN (*without*).

Nay, but thou must, or fail in honest truth.
I have thy promise once again to see me
Ere thy revengeful purpose take effect;
Yea, and I hold thee to it.

RASINGA.

Turn from my door, for thou since then hast
seen me,
And hast no further claim.

JUAN (*without*).

Tamper not so unfairly with thy words:
I saw thee as the forest peasant sees
A hunted tiger passing to his lair.

Is this sufficient to acquit thee? No;
I claim thy promise still, as unredeem'd.
Unbar thy chamber door and let me in.

RASINGA (*opening the door, and as JUAN enters*).
Come in, come in then, if it must be so.
Is misery a pleasant sight to thee,
That thou dost pray and beg to look upon it?

JUAN.

Forgive me, brave Rasinga, if I say,
The mis'ry of thine alter'd face, to me
Is sight more welcome than a brow composed.
But 't is again to change that haggard face
To the composure of a peaceful mind,
That I am come. — O deign to listen to me!
Let me beseech thee not to wreck thy happiness
For fell revenge!

RASINGA.

Well, well; and were it so,
I wreck my happiness to save my honour.

JUAN.

To save thine honour?

RASINGA.

Yes; the meanest slave
That turns the stubborn soil with dropping brow,
Would hold an outraged, unrevenged chief
As more contemptible than torpid reptile
That cannot sting the foot which treads upon it.

JUAN.

When fear or sordid motives are imputed
As causes why revenge hath been forborne,
Contempt will follow, from the natural feelings
Of every breast, or savage or instructed.
But when the valiant and the gen'rous pardon,
Ev'n instantly as lightning rends the trunk
Of the strong Nahagaha *, pride of the wood,
A kindred glow of admiration passes
Through every manly bosom, proving surely,
That men are brethren, children of one sire,
The Lord of heaven and earth.

RASINGA.

Perplex me not with vain and lofty words,
Which to the stunn'd ear of an injured man
Are like the fitful sounds of a swoln torrent,
Noble, but void of all distinctive meaning.

JUAN.

Their meaning is distinct as well as noble,
Teaching to froward man the will of God.

RASINGA.

And who taught thee to know this will of God

JUAN.

Our sacred Scripture.

* The iron tree.

RASINGA.

What? your Christian Scripture,
Which, as I have been told, hath bred more discord
Than all the other firebrands of the earth,
With church opposed to church, and sect to sect,
In fierce contention ; ay, fell bloody strife.
Certes, if all from the same book be taught,
Its words may give, as I before have said,
A noble sound, but no distinctive meaning.

JUAN.

That which thou hast been told of shameful discord,
Perversely drawn from the pure source of peace,
Is true ; and yet it is a book of wisdom,
Whose clear, important, general truths may guide
The simplest and the wisest : truths which still
Have been by every church and sect acknowledged.

RASINGA.

And what, I pray, are these acknowledged precepts,
Which they but learn, it seems, to disobey?

JUAN.

The love of God, and of that blessed Being,
Sent in his love to teach his will to men,
Imploring them their hearts to purify
From hatred, wrong, and ev'ry sensual excess,

That in a happier world, when this is past,
They may enjoy true blessedness for ever.

RASINGA.

Then why hold all this coil concerning that
Which is so plain, and excellent, and acknow-
ledged ?

JUAN.

Because they have in busy restless zeal
Raised to importance slight and trivial parts ;
Contending for them, till they have at last
Believed them of more moment, ev'n than all
The plain and lib'ral tenor of the whole.
As if we should maintain a wart or mole
To be the main distinctions of a man,
Rather than the fair brow and upright form, —
The graceful, general lineaments of nature.

RASINGA.

This is indeed most strange : how hath it been ?

JUAN.

The Scripture lay before them like the sky,
With all its glorious stars, in some smooth pool
Clearly reflected, till in busy idleness,
Like children gath'ring pebbles on its brink,
Each needs must cast his mite of learning in
To try its depth, till sky, and stars, and glory,
Become one wrinkled maze of wild confusion.
But that good Scripture and its blessed Author

Stand far apart from such perplex'd contention,
As the bright sky from the distorted surface
Of broken waters wherein it was imaged.

RASINGA.

And this good Scripture does, as thou believest,
Contain the will of God.

JUAN.

I do believe it.
And therein is a noble duty taught,
To pardon injuries, — to pardon enemies.

RASINGA.

I do not doubt it. 'T is an easy matter
For holy sage or prophet in his cell,
Who lives aloof from wrongs and injuries
Which other men endure, to teach such precepts.

JUAN.

Most justly urged : but he who utter'd this
Did not enforce it at a rate so easy.
Though proved by many good and marv'llous
acts
To be the mission'd son of the Most High,
He meekly bore the wrongs of wicked men ;
And in the agonies of crucifixion, —
The cruel death he died,—did from his cross
Look up to Heaven in earnest supplication
Ev'n for the men who were inflicting on him
Those shameful suff'rings, — pardon ev'n for
them.

RASINGA (*bowing his head and covering his face with his hands*).

Indeed, indeed, this was a noble Being.

JUAN.

Ay, brave Rasinga ; ireful as thou art,
Thou hast a heart to own such excellence.

(*Laying his hand soothingly on RASINGA'S.*)
And do consider too how he who wrong'd thee,—
The youthful Samarkoon——

RASINGA (*shaking off his hand impatiently*).

Name not the villain.

JUAN.

That epithet belongs not to a youth,
Who in the fever'd madness of strong passion,
By beauty kindled, goaded by despair,
Perhaps with sympathy, for that he deem'd
A sister's sorrows——

RASINGA.

Hold thy peace, De Creda ;
Thy words exasperate and stir within me
The half-spent flames of wrath.
He is a villain, an audacious villain ;
A most ungrateful, cunning, artful villain.
Leave me, I charge thee, lest thou utter that
Which might provoke me to unseemly outrage.
I owe my life to thee, and but for that ——
Leave me, I charge thee.

JUAN.

I do not fear what thou may'st do to me.

RASINGA.

No ; but *I* fear it, therefore quit me instantly.
Out, out ! (*Opening the door and pushing him
away.*)

Ho ! Ehleypoolie ! ye who wait without,
I want your presence here. [*Exit* JUAN.]

Enter EHLEYPOLIE and MIHDOONY.

EHLEYPOLIE (*after having waited some time to
receive the commands of his master, who without
noticing him walks about the chamber in violent
agitation*).

My lord, we humbly wait for your commands.
(*Aside to* MIHDOONY.)

He heeds us not : as though we were not here.
(*Aloud.*)

We humbly wait, my lord, to know your pleasure.

RASINGA.

My pleasure is ——
(*Stopping, and looking bewildered.*)
I know not what it is.

MIHDOONY.

Perhaps, my lord, you wish to countermand

Some orders that regard the executions
Fix'd for to-morrow, at an hour so early.

RASINGA.

When did Rasinga countermand his orders,
So call'd for, and so given?—Why wait ye here?

EHLEYPOLIE.

You summon'd us, my lord; and well you know
That Ehleypoolie hath a ready aptness
For ——

RASINGA.

Boasting, fooling, flattery, and lies.
Begone, I say; I did not summon you.
At least I meant it not.

[Turns away hastily, and exit by another door.]

EHLEYPOLIE.

For boasting, fooling, flattery, and lies!
How angry men pervert all sober judgment!
If I commend myself, who, like myself,
Can know so well my actual claims to praise?

MIHDOONY.

Most true; for surely no one else doth know it.

EHLEYPOLIE.

And fooling is an angry name for wit.

MIHDOONY.

Thy wit is fooling; therefore should it seem,
Thy fooling may be wit. Then for thy flattery,
What dost thou say to that?

EHLEYPOLIE.

Had he disliked it,
It had been dealt to him in scantier measure.
And lies—to hear a prince whose fitful humours
Can mar or make the vassals who surround him,
Name this as special charge on any one!
His violent passions have reduced his judgment
To very childishness.

MIHDOONY.

But dost thou think the fierceness of his wrath
Will make him really bring to execution
A wife who has so long and dearly loved him?

EHLEYPOLIE.

How should I know what he will really do?
The words he spoke to me ev'n now may show
thee

His judgment is obscured. But if he do;
Where is the harm when faded wives are cross
And will not live in quietness with a younger,
To help them on a step to their Newané?
She never favour'd me, that dame Artina,
And I foresaw she would not come to good.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

A large Court, or open Space, with every thing prepared for the Execution of SAMARKOON : a Seat of State near the front of the Stage.

Spectators and Guards discovered.

FIRST SPECTATOR.

There is a mass of life assembled here :
All eyes, no voice ; there is not ev'n the murmur
Of stifled whispers. — Deep and solemn silence !

SECOND SPECTATOR.

Hush, hush ! Artina comes, and by her side,
Her son in the habiliments of one
Prepared for death. This surely cannot be :
It is impossible.

FIRST SPECTATOR.

I hope it is.

Enter ARTINA and SAMAR, with SABAWATTÉ on the one side of them, and JUAN DE CREDA on the other ; Attendants following.

ARTINA.

Alas, for thee, my noble, generous child !

SAMAR.

Fear not for me, dear mother! Lean upon me.
Nay, let me feel your hand upon my shoulder,
And press'd more heavily. It pleases me,
Weak as I am, to think I am thy prop.

ARTINA.

O what a prop thou would'st have been to me!
And what a creature for a loathly grave, —
For death to prey upon! — Turn, turn! Oh,
turn!
Advance no farther on this dreadful path.

SAMAR.

I came not here to turn; and for the path,
And what it leads to, if you can endure it,
Then so can I: — fear not for me, dear mother!
Nay, do not fear at all; 't will soon be over.

ARTINA.

Oh! my brave heart! my anguish and my pride,
Ev'n on the very margin of the grave. —
Good Sabawatté! hold him; take him from me.

SABAWATTÉ.

I cannot, madam; and De Creda says,
'T is best that you should yield to his desire.

ARTINA.

It is a fearful — an appalling risk.

A A 3

SABAWATTÉ.

Is there aught else that you would charge me
with ?

ARTINA.

Yes, dearest friend, there is — it is my last.
Let not my little daughters know of this ;
They are too young to miss me. Little Moora
Will soon forget that she has seen my face ;
Therefore whoe'er is kind to them they'll love.
Say this to her, who will so shortly fill
Their mother's place, and she will pity them.
Add, if thou wilt, that I such gentle dealings
Expected from her hands, and bade thee teach
them
To love and honour her.

SABAWATTÉ.

My heart will burst in uttering such words.

ARTINA.

Yet for my sake thou'lt do it ; wilt thou not ?
[SABAWATTÉ *motions assent, but cannot speak.*]

Enter SAMARKOON chained and guarded.

ARTINA (*rushing on to meet him*).

My brother, my young Samarkoon ; my brother,
Whom I so loved in early, happy days ;
Thou top and blossom of my father's house !

SAMARKOON.

Weep not, my sister, death brings sure relief;
And many a brave man's son has died the death
That now abideth me.

ARTINA.

Alas! ere that bright sun which shines so
 brightly
Shall reach his noon, of my brave father's race
No male descendant shall remain alive, —
Not one to wear the honours of his name, —
And I the cursed cause of all this wreck!
Oh, what was I, that I presumptuously
Should think to keep his undivided heart!
'T were better I had lived a drudge, — a slave,
To do the meanest service of his house,
Than see thee thus, my hapless, noble brother.

SAMARKOON.

Lament not, gentle sister; to have seen thee
Debased and scorn'd, and that most wond'rous
 creature,
Whose name I will not utter, made the means
Of vexing thee—it would have driven me frantic.
Then do not thus lament; nor think that I
Of aught accuse thee. No; still let us be
In love most dearly link'd, which only death
Has power to sever. —

[*To SAMAR, as first observing him.*]

Boy, why art thou here?

A A 4

SAMAR.

To be my mother's partner and companion.
'T is meet ; for who but me should cling to her ?

Enter RASINGA, and places himself in the seat : a deep silence follows for a considerable time.

MIHDOONY (*who has kept guard with his spearmen over SAMARKOON, now approaching RASINGA*).

The hour is past, my lord, which was appointed ;
And you commanded me to give you notice.
Is it your pleasure that the executioners
Proceed to do their office on the prisoners,
Who are all three prepared ?

RASINGA.

What dost thou say ?

MIHDOONY.

The three prepared for death abide your signal.

RASINGA.

There are but two.

MIHDOONY.

Forgive opposing words ; there is a third.

RASINGA.

A third, say'st thou ? and who ?

MIHDOONY.

Your son, my lord ;

A volunteer for death, whom no persuasion
Can move to be divided from his mother.

RASINGA.

I cannot credit this ; it is some craft, —
Some poor device. Go, bring the boy to me.
[MIHDOONY *leads SAMAR to his father.*]
Why art thou here, my child ? and is it so,
That thou dost wish to die ?

SAMAR.

**I wish to be where'er my mother is,
Alive or dead.**

RASINGA.

Think well of what thou say'st !
It shall be so if thou indeed desire it.
But be advised ; death is a dreadful thing.

SAMAR.

**They say it is : but I will be with her ;
I'll die her death, and feel but what she suffers.**

RASINGA.

And art thou not afraid? Thou 'rt ignorant;
Thou dost not know the misery of drowning;—
The booming waters closing over thee,
And thou still sinking, struggling in the tank,
On whose deep bottom weeds and water snakes;

And filthy lizards will around thee twine,
Whilst thou art choking. It is horrible.

SAMAR.

The death that is appointed for my mother
Is good enough for me. We'll be together :
Clinging to her, I shall not be afraid,
No, nor will she.

RASINGA.

But wherefore wilt thou leave thy father, Samar ?
Thou'st not offended me ; I love thee dearly ;
I have no son but thee.

SAMAR.

But thou wilt soon.
Thy new young wife will give thee soon another,
And he will be thy son ; but I will be
Son of Artina. We'll be still together :
When, in the form of antelope or loorie,
She wends her way to Boodhoo, I shall still
Be as her young one, sporting by her side.

RASINGA (*catching him in his arms, and bursting
into tears*).

My generous boy ! my noble valiant boy !
O such a son bestow'd on such a father !
Live, noble creature ! and thy mother also !
Her crime is pardon'd, if it was a crime ;
Ye shall not be divided.

SAMAR (*running back to ARTINA*).

O mother ! raise your eyes ! you are to live ;
We're both to live ; my father says we are.
And he has wept and he has kiss'd me too,
As he was wont to do, ay, fonder far.
Come, come ! (*Pulling her towards RASINGA.*)
He's good, you need not fear him now.

RASINGA.

Artina, that brave child has won thy life ;
And he hath won for me —— I have no words
That can express what he hath won for me.
But thou art sad and silent ; how is this,
With life, and such a son to make life sweet ?

ARTINA.

I have a son, but my brave father, soon, —
Who died an honour'd death, and in his grave
Lies like an honour'd chief, — will have no son,
No male descendant, living on the earth,
To keep his name and lineage from extinction.

[RASINGA *throws himself into his seat and
buries his face in his mantle.*]

FIRST SPECTATOR (*in a low voice*).

Well timed and wisely spoken : 't is a woman
Worthy to be the mother of that boy.

SECOND SPECTATOR (*in a low voice to the first*).

Look, look, I pray thee, how Rasinga's breast
Rises and falls beneath its silken vesture.

FIRST SPECTATOR (*as before*).

There is within a dreadful conflict passing,
Known by these tokens, as swoln waves aloft
Betray the secret earthquake's deep-pent strug-
gles.

SECOND SPECTATOR (*as before*).

But he is calmer now, and puts away
The cover from his face : he seems relieved.

RASINGA (*looking round him*).

Approach, De Creda ; thou hast stood aloof :
Thou feel'st my late rude passion and unkind-
ness.

Misery makes better men than me unkind ;
But pardon me, and I will make amends.
I would not listen to thy friendly counsel,
But now I will most freely grant to thee
Whatever grace or favour thou desirest :
Even now, before thou nam'st it.

JUAN.

Thanks, thanks, Rasinga ! this is brave amends.

(*Runs to SAMARKOON and commands his
chains to be knocked off, speaking im-
patiently as it is doing.*)

Out on such tardy bungling ! Ye are craftsmen
Who know full well the art to bind men's limbs,
But not to set them free.

(*Leads SAMARKOON when unbound towards
RASINGA, speaking to him as they go.*)

Come, noble Samarkoon! nay, look more gracious :

If thou disdain'st to thank him for thy life,
That falls to me, and I will do it gladly.

(Presenting SAMARKOON to RASINGA.)

This is the boon which thou hast granted me,
The life of Samarkoon : a boon more precious
To him who grants than who receives it. Yet
Take my most ardent thanks ; take many thanks
From other grateful bosoms, beating near thee.

ARTINA *(kneeling to embrace the knees of RASINGA)*.

And mine ; O mine ! wilt thou not look upon
me ?

I do not now repine that thou art changed :
Be happy with another fairer dame,
It shall not grieve me now.

RASINGA *(raising her)*.

Away, Artina, do not thank me thus.
Remove her, Samarkoon, a little space.

(Waving them off.)

Juan de Creda, art thou satisfied ?
Have I done well ?

JUAN.

Yes, I am satisfied.

RASINGA *(drawing himself up with dignity)*.
But I am not ; and that which I have done
Would not have satisfied the generous Saviour

Who died upon the cross. — Thy friend is pardon'd,
And more than pardon'd ; — he is now my brother,
And I to him resign the mountain bride.

*[A shout of joy bursts from all around :
ARTINA folds SAMAR to her breast, and
SAMARKOON falls at the feet of RASINGA.]*

SAMARKOON.

My noble generous foe, whom I have wrong'd ;
Urged by strong passions, wrong'd most grievously !

Now may I kneel to thee without disgrace,
For thou hast bound me with those bands of strength
That do ennoble, not disgrace the bravest.

RASINGA.

Rise, Samarkoon ; I do accept thy thanks
Since that which I resign is worth——But cease !
Speak not of this — if it be possible,
We'll think of this no more.

(Turning to ARTINA.)

And now, my only and my noble wife,
And thou, my dauntless boy, stand by my side,
And I, so flank'd, will feel myself in honour, —
Honour which lifts and warms and cheers the heart.

And we shall have a feast within our walls ;

Our good De Creda, he will tarry with us ;
He will not go to-morrow as he threaten'd.

JUAN.

I'll stay with you a day beyond the time,
And then I must depart ; a pressing duty
Compels me so to do.

RASINGA.

But thou 'lt return again, and bring with thee
The sacred Book which thou hast told me of?

JUAN.

I will return again and bring that book,
If Heaven permit. But man's uncertain life
Is like a rain-drop hanging on the bough,
Amongst ten thousand of its sparkling kindred,
The remnants of some passing thunder shower,
Who have their moments, dropping one by one,
And which shall soonest lose its per'lous hold
We cannot guess.—
I, on the Continent, must for a time
A wand'rer be ; if I return no more,
You may conclude death has prevented me.

Enter MONTEBESA.

RASINGA.

Ha, mother ! welcome, welcome, Montebesa !
There ; take again your daughter and her boy.

We've striven stoutly with a fearful storm,
But, thanks to good De Creda, it is past ;
And all the brighter shall our sky appear,
For that the clouds which have obscured its face
Were of a denseness dark and terrible.

The Scene closes.

THE MATCH
A C O M E D Y.

IN THREE ACTS.

VOL. III.

B B

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

SIR CAMERON KUNLIFFE.

FRANKLIN, *Relation to Sir Cameron.*

BRIGHTLY, } *Friends to Sir Cameron.*
THORNHILL, }

MASTER LAWRY, *an idle urchin, Brother to Emma.*

HUMPHRY.

Locksmith, Servants.

WOMEN.

LATITIA VANE.

EMMA, *her Niece.*

FLOUNCE, *Waiting-maid to Latitia.*

THE HOUSEKEEPER *of Sir Cameron.*

Ladies, Servants, &c.

*Scene, a Watering-place, and Sir Cameron's Seat
in the neighbourhood.*

THE MATCH.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A low Parlour in a Lodging-house, with a Glass-door in the bottom of the Stage, opening into a Garden.*

Enter BRIGHTLY *and* THORNHILL.

BRIGHTLY (*after surveying the room*).

Yes, these apartments will do very well; and you shall have your study, — if a place with one shelf for books and a commodious chair to sleep in deserves the name, — overhead.

THORNHILL.

But you forget the writing-table, the most important thing of all.

BRIGHTLY.

Most important, indeed, for a poet who never writes any thing longer than a sonnet, making

progress at the astonishing rate of one couplet per day. The window-sill might do well enough for that.

THORNHILL.

But you think of former times, my friend ; rhyming becomes easier by practice.

BRIGHTLY.

So it does, like all other things ; and I dare say you can now write two couplets per day with no great difficulty.

THORNHILL.

Don't trouble thy head about my progress ; let us set out on our visit to Sir Cameron. His mansion is scarcely a mile off, I am told. He is a kind-hearted fellow ; he will be glad to see us.

BRIGHTLY.

Yes, if he do not take it into his head that we have some covert design in our visit.

THORNHILL.

Some covert design !

BRIGHTLY.

Ay ; sounding his intentions as to standing for the county : propitiating his patronage for some itinerant artist or lecturer : introducing to his acquaintance some forward chaperon, with a troop of female cousins at her back, to invade the daily peace of his home. O dear ! what will

he not imagine, rather than that we are scampering about the country for holiday recreation, and have come ten miles out of our way to see him.

THORNHILL.

You are somewhat hard upon him, methinks. Some events of his youth unhappily gave him a bad opinion of mankind; for myself, I never found him suspicious.

BRIGHTLY.

If he thought you had wit enough to deceive him, it might be otherwise. You may thank your poetry, my dear Thornhill, for his confidence.

THORNHILL.

Nay, spare me, dear Brightly; else I shall suppose thou art a poet thyself, under the rose, and canst not brook a rival.

[MASTER LAWRY, *who appears in the garden with a bow and arrow in his hand, discharges his arrow through the glass-door, and breaks one of the panes.*]

See that urchin in the garden; he has broken a pane of the window, and is running away.

BRIGHTLY.

He sha'n't escape, however. (*Opens the window, runs after him, and returns dragging in LAWRY by the collar*). You need not struggle

with me, little master ; I 'll keep you fast. Why did you hit the window with your arrow ?

LAWRY.

Because I meant to hit the door.

BRIGHTLY.

I wish thou hadst been a better marksman. What will the landlady say to thee ?

LAWRY.

Ay, more words no doubt than I shall care to hear. — Ah, miss Aimy, miss Aimy ! how many scrapes I get into by you !

BRIGHTLY.

And who is miss Aimy, I pray ?

LAWRY.

My arrow, Sir : that is the name I give her.

THORNHILL.

And a very appropriate one, methinks.

BRIGHTLY.

But what is thine own name ?

LAWRY.

Which of them, Sir ?

BRIGHTLY.

How many hast thou ?

LAWRY.

Two godfathers, two grandfathers, and a

brace of uncles, have furnished me with names enow.—How many do they come to ?

THORNHILL.

Names enough, no doubt, for any one but a German Prince. What school dost thou attend ?

LAWRY.

None, sir.

THORNHILL.

Who teaches thee to read and write ?

LAWRY.

Any body,—who has most time and most patience.

THORNHILL.

But art thou not to be put to school ?

LAWRY.

Yes, Sir, when aunt Letty can make up her mind, whether the old floggum way, or the Pestilozzi way, or the Hamiltonian fashion, is best for my learning ; and whether a high situation, or a warm situation, or an eastern exposure, or a western exposure, is best for my health ; and whether three hundred schoolfellows, or fifty schoolfellows, or twenty schoolfellows, fagging or no fagging, be best for my morals.

BRIGHTLY.

Ha! ha! ha ! I will not ask whose nephew thou art. And thou hast a pretty sister too.

LAWRY.

Yes, Sir ; people do call her pretty, and she is civil enough to believe them.

BRIGHTLY.

Out upon thee for a saucy knave !—Thine aunt is here then ? And where does she live ?

LAWRY.

I can't tell you, Sir ! When she has found out which of the twenty houses she has been looking at is the cheerfullest, and the cleanest, and the most convenient, I suppose she will settle in it.

BRIGHTLY.

Go to her, my little master, and give my best respects, and say that an old friend will do himself the honour of waiting upon her presently. — Nay, you need not look at the broken pane so ruefully ; I will satisfy the landlady on that point.

(Leads LAWRY into the garden, where he disappears amongst the bushes, then returning to the front.)

Ha ! ha ! ha ! Well, I can't help laughing for the soul of me .

THORNHILL.

What tickles you so much ?

BRIGHTLY.

Those two originals come in one another's way

again. There was a report of a love affair between them several months ago, which went off upon some foolish difficulty or other ; and now she comes here to place herself in his neighbourhood.

THORNHILL (*aside*).

I hope it is only to throw *herself* in his way. (*Aloud.*) Poh ! it will all end, as it did before, in scruples, and fancies, and misapprehensions ! Don't you think it will ?

BRIGHTLY.

I hope not : what a match they would make if it could be effected !

THORNHILL.

How ! Suspicion and indecision put together as yoke-fellows !

BRIGHTLY.

Why not ? If they are together, two people may lead an uneasy life, to be sure ; but it will, in all probability, save four from being in the like condition.

THORNHILL.

It will never be effected.

BRIGHTLY.

I'll bet my Rembrandt against your paddock, which I have long coveted for orchard ground, that it will be effected.

THORNHILL.

Well then, I take your bet that it will not.

BRIGHTLY.

Hush, hush ! Here comes one of the parties concerned.

Enter SIR CAMERON KUNLIFFE.

SIR CAMERON.

Welcome, Brightly ; and Thornhill, also, welcome both to this little by-nook of dissipation ! and when you took your route this way, I flatter myself you remembered that you have an old friend in the neighbourhood.

BRIGHTLY.

We did so, Kunliffe, and were now proposing to walk to your house. It is, I believe, within two miles of the village.

SIR CAMERON.

A short distance, which I hope you will often traverse, on foot or on horseback, as suits your convenience. I saw your groom at the stable door, Thornhill, rubbing down that beautiful brown nag of yours, and he told me you were here.

THORNILL.

It is lucky you did ; we might have gone to your house else and missed you.

SIR CAMERON.

So you might.—Did I not hear you talking of a bet as I entered ? You will not be silly enough to bet away that beautiful animal ?

THORNHILL.

O no ! it did not concern the nag.

BRIGHTLY.

It neither concerns the nag nor the nag's master ; yet it is a bet of some moment too.

SIR CAMERON.

No doubt, no doubt ; it was foolish in me to think of the paces of a horse, when all the menage of our borough canvassers is approaching, and doubtful enough, I wot, to tempt any better.

THORNHILL.

It did not concern the borough neither.

SIR CAMERON.

O ! you are close and mysterious, gentlemen.

BRIGHTLY.

To give you the pleasure of guessing.

SIR CAMERON.

I'faith, you are mistaken in that. What plea-

sure should I have in guessing? No man on earth has less curiosity than myself.

BRIGHTLY.

I think I have known some *men* with less : had you said *women*, I should have assented more readily.

SIR CAMERON.

Fy upon thee! both men and women are nine-pins for thy bowl to roll at.

THORNHILL.

And he may have good bowling here, I trow ; there be men of many conditions in this by-nook of dissipation, as you call it, and I am sure there is one lady, at least, of so many minds and moods, that she may very well stand for twenty.

SIR CAMERON.

Your bet concerns a lady, then ?

BRIGHTLY.

It would be great unthrift to tell *you* that, who have no curiosity.

SIR CAMERON.

Well, well, and you have told it me, though you are not aware of it.

Enter MRS. FLOUNCE, coming forward very briskly, and then pretending to draw back in confusion.

FLOUNCE.

O dear!—I beg pardon, gentlemen.—I knew not you were here—I came in search of Master Lawry. My lady is frightened to death about him,—but she does not know that I am come after him to this hotel.—O! she is in such a quandary; she did not know where to send me after him: for you know, gentlemen, a child may break his bones or come to mischief anywhere.

SIR CAMERON.

Nobody will deny that, Mrs. Flounce.

FLOUNCE.

O lud, Sir Cameron! are you in this hotel? But you have a fine house in the neighbourhood, as the waiter tells me,—not that I inquired—I enters into no matters as don't belong to me.

SIR CAMERON.

If you had inquired, Mrs. Flounce, I should have taken it as a compliment.

BRIGHTLY.

And if your lady had desired you to inquire, it would have been taken as a compliment of double value.

FLOUNCE.

She bid me inquire! how could you think of such a thing, Mr. Brightly, when she expressly forbade me to inquire anything about it?

BRIGHTLY.

And you are a woman of discretion, Mrs. Flounce, of very deep discretion. Still keep your lady's counsel as you do now, and you will deserve the best silk gown in her wardrobe.

THORNHILL.

And her best garnet brooch into the bargain.

FLOUNCE.

Oh, what are silk gowns and brooches to me! Master Lawry! Master Lawry! That child is the plague of our lives. Is he in that there garden? where shall I find him?

BRIGHTLY.

You had better go to the fortune-teller, if there be such a person in the place; he may know about him as well as other stray goods.

FLOUNCE.

No, no! I hates fortune-tellers; they have told me so many lies already. — Good morning, gentlemen, I- ax your pardon. — I have been very rude; shockingly rude indeed.

[Exit, curtseying herself away to the door.]

SIR CAMERON.

But you will both walk to my house as you proposed, and I shall have the pleasure of attending you.

THORNHILL.

Have the goodness to wait till we have given some orders about our luggage, and we are at your command.

[*Exeunt* BRIGHTLY and THORNHILL.]

SIR CAMERON (*alone*).

Did not know that my house is in this neighbourhood.—Prettyinnocence!—Has she changed plans again?—Does the wind set fair for a second venture?——I might have known she was here by Franklin being so ready to come to me. That girl, Emma, stands between him and his wits. And these two fellows casting up in this corner so unexpectedly, what may this mean? A bet, forsooth! are they after her, too? But be canvassing or courtship the object, they sha'n't encompass me in their snares.

Re-enter BRIGHTLY and THORNHILL.

BRIGHTLY.

Now we are ready to follow you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment in Miss VANE's House.

Enter EMMA, with a small embroidering frame in her hand, which she puts upon the table, followed by LAWRY carrying a work-bag. She then sits down to her work.

LAWRY.

No, no, sister! no work now! you promised I should have some skeins to hold.

EMMA.

And you shall hold them all, Lawry, when they are wanted. Am I to wind them before, only to amuse you, as one throws out a ball for the kitten? I must begin this ranunculus with one or other of these bright colours immediately.

LAWRY.

And I know why you are in such a hurry.

EMMA.

Dost thou, master conjurer?

LAWRY.

Ay, marry do I; for if you don't, Aunt Letty

will come to choose the colour for you, and then it won't be begun for a week. O! here she is; I must get out of the way of her errands, and directions, and re-directions, as fast as I can. I'm sure, if I could keep them all in my head, the learning of Greek would be a joke to me.

Enter LATITIA (catching hold of LAWRY as he tries to pass).

LATITIA.

Where art thou going, urchin? hast thou given my message to the coachman?

LAWRY.

No, ma'am, but I'll do it immediately, in the very words you spoke. He must be at the back entry ten minutes before two.

LATITIA.

No, not quite so soon. (*To EMMA.*) Shall I say half-past two, my dear, or a quarter before three? — Perhaps that may be too late. — Tell him half-past two, unless he should——

LAWRY.

I'll just give him the first message, Auntie, no more.

[Breaks from her and exit.]

LATITIA.

Impudent little runagate! that child must be put to school forthwith.

Enter a Servant with letters.

But here are my letters, and they will relieve me, I trust, from many perplexities.

EMMA.

Yes, my dear aunt, if they do not leave as many behind as they carry away.

LATITIA.

Peace, child; thou art so thoughtless that nothing is a perplexity to thee. (*Looks at the letters lying on the table.*) Ha! here is an answer to my application for the house. (*Opens a letter and reads.*)

EMMA.

And does the landlord agree to your terms?

LATITIA (*in a hesitating slow drawl*).
Ye-s.

EMMA.

Then there is one difficulty surmounted.

LATITIA (*as before*).

Ye-s, so far surmounted; but I have been thinking further of it. The drawing-rooms are too large, and my dressing-room is too small, and there is no convenient closet for my curiosities and china.

EMMA.

And will you give it up, after all, just when he agrees to your terms?

LATITIA.

Nay, I don't know that. If my own apartment were better, and room for my curiosities, and if the back staircase were not so miserably narrow, I should not hesitate for a moment.

EMMA.

But things are as they are, and cannot be altered ; so you must either take the house, with its imperfections, or give it up.

LATITIA.

Ay, there it is : he is so unreasonable as to desire an immediate answer. I wish that word *immediate* were expunged from the vocabulary. If I had time, I could write to Lady Trinkum about it, and likewise Mr. Changet, the best judge of houses in the world ; but to commit myself at once —— Oh ! what is to be done ! — What seal is that you are examining so minutely?

EMMA.

Two gules reversed on a field azure.

LATITIA (*eagerly*).

Ha ! from that quarter ! at it again

EMMA.

Did you not expect a second proposal when

your former treaty of marriage broke off because his fortune was deemed insufficient for your fashionable plans of expense? — for, by the unexpected death of his elder brother, some three months ago, that obstacle is removed.

LATITIA (*snatching the letter from her hand, and reading it eagerly*).

Thou art quite right, it is a second proposal; and, oh! what shall I do? (*Traversing the room in a disturbed manner.*) I shall appear sordid — I shall appear mean — I shall appear mercenary in his eyes.

EMMA.

Not more so than when you declined his first proposal on that ground. You will now appear to him, not very sentimental, indeed, but consistent.

LATITIA.

Oh! but I did not ostensibly decline his offer on that ground, though that was the true one. — What shall I do! Suffer him to think meanly of my motives; and give up all my plans too of living a distinguished single woman, in a house of my own, — the patroness of arts, the encourager of genius, the loadstar in society! — You know all this, my dear child, — you know what the wishes of my heart have been.

EMMA.

Indeed I knew that you spoke about it, but I did not know that you wished for it.

LATITIA.

Ah! but I did—I thought I did. (*Pacing backward and forward in an irresolute way; then stopping short.*) And now, when this house, this most desirable house, may be had upon my own terms!

EMMA.

But you forget, my dear aunt, that it wants a closet for your curiosities, and that the back staircase is so miserably narrow.

LATITIA.

Don't distract me, Emma: tell me what to do. How does it strike you? Would it not be better——O, no! that won't do, neither.—O that Lady Totterdown or Mrs. Siftall were here, that I might ask their advice!—What would you advise me to do?

EMMA.

The writer of that letter is not unreasonable enough to require an immediate answer: lay it aside for the present, and open the next. (*Pointing to another letter.*)

LATITIA (*opening it*).

I am glad she has found time to answer me at

last. You must listen to this, Emma ; it regards the education of Lawry. Mrs. Overall is a woman of a deeply philosophical mind ; and on such an important subject, I was anxious that she should give me her opinion.

EMMA.

The thing of all others she is most ready to give. And what is it ?

LATITIA (*reading*).

“ I have been prevented by many avocations from writing ” — I sha’ n’t read the apology, but pass on to the matter in question : — “ Education of every kind has, till lately, proceeded upon a wrong principle. Every body taught the same things, without regard to talent or capacity. Should not a boy’s instruction be adapted to his genius ? ” — She is very right there, Emma ; you need not smile. There is good reason in what she says. — “ If he has a turn for mathematics, would you make him a lawyer ? If forensic eloquence, would you cram him with grammar and Greek ? If for poetry, would you confine him to a counting-house ? If for painting, would you entangle him in diplomacy ? Apply all the force of tuition to his principal, — his leading talent, and you will make a distinguished man of him with little trouble.”

EMMA (*laughing heartily*).

And how shall we discover poor Lawry’s

talent, if playfulness and mischief be not ranked as natural endowments? Pray forgive me, aunt : I am too flippant.

LATITIA.

Indeed, I think you are, child : listen to what follows : — “ And how fortunate it is for your purpose that Dr. Crany, one of our most celebrated phrenologists, is in at present. Let him examine your nephew’s head, and he will tell you at once what course to pursue.”

Enter BRIGHTLY.

Mr. Brightly, I refer to you.

BRIGHTLY.

And what is the matter in question ?

LATITIA.

To educate my nephew according to the bent of his genius. Is not that right?

BRIGHTLY.

Assuredly, when you can find it out.

LATITIA.

Dr. Crany, the phrenologist, will do that for us.

BRIGHTLY.

Very willingly, I doubt not. I forgot what new lights philosophy throws on such mysteries now-a-days. Yes, by all means let the boy’s

head be examined. Does this little girl make a jest of it? — Yes, yes, let him be examined, and then you will be no longer undecided on the treatment of your little will o' the wisp?

EMMA.

To be sure that would be something gained.

BRIGHTLY.

Let us try for it, at least; I'll go to the doctor forthwith.

LATITIA (*running after him as he is going out*).

O no, no! not yet: you are too sudden, too hasty, Mr. Brightly. I must have more time to consider of it.

BRIGHTLY.

And let the doctor proceed on his tour, and repent when the opportunity is past.

LATITIA.

Does he leave the place so soon?

BRIGHTLY.

I have heard so: this will be your only opportunity.

LATITIA.

Go, then, go! — O how hasty and teasing these opportunities are!

EMMA.

Indeed, my dear aunt, you generally make them so. *[Exit BRIGHTLY.]*

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT.

The carriage is waiting, Ma'am.

LATITIA.

Let it wait. It comes before the time.

EMMA.

Indeed, Ma'am, your coachman seldom makes that mistake. By my watch he is half an hour after it. *(Looking at her watch.)*

LATITIA.

Come, come then! — Flounce! Flounce! *(calling off the Stage)*, bring my shawl and bonnet. *[Exeunt in a hurry.]*

SCENE III.

Court before LATITIA's House.

Enter SIR CAMERON KUNLIFFE and Mrs. FLOUNCE, speaking as they enter.

SIR CAMERON.

And Miss Vane is only gone out for a short airing?

FLOUNCE.

Yes, Sir Cameron; that is to say, if she keeps in the mind as when she set out. I never answers for more than that of any lady.

SIR CAMERON.

To be sure, Mrs. Flounce, your prudence is commendable. And since she may probably return so soon, I shall take the liberty of waiting in the parlour.

FLOUNCE.

O! not there, Sir, if you please: you had better wait in the harbour yonder; the smell of all them roses and honeysuckles will delight you.

SIR CAMERON.

I thank you, Ma'am. I will, by your leave, go into the parlour, and smell the roses another time. *[Exit into the house.]*

FLOUNCE.

Plague take him for a very moral of perversity! for he'll find Mr. Franklin in the parlour; and how many odd notions may come into his head the cunning one himself would not guess. For, dear me! he has a marvellous gift for making much out of nothing, as his valet at the hall tells me. — He's perversity personified; for if one wants him to turn to the right hand, for that very reason he turns to the left. *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV.

The Parlour.

Enter SIR CAMERON, *starting back as he enters.*

SIR CAMERON.

Did I not see a man go hastily into that opposite door? — I am not the only person, I apprehend, who is waiting the return of the ladies. And my lady's maid too; she is no novice in her calling. — “O, Sir! had you not better wait in the harbour yonder, and smell to the roses?” Well, well, what is all this to me? I prefer her, I fear, with all her follies, to any other woman; but, thank God! I am still free: I have not committed myself. She is coming: I hear voices in the hall — her own voice. — Why should a voice sound so sweet which so often repeats silly things?

Enter LATITIA.

LATITIA.

Good morning, Sir Cameron. It is very good in you to come so early to see us. How unexpected the pleasure of meeting you here!

SIR CAMERON.

To show my bodily presence two miles from

my own house is not surely very wonderful, though it may be unexpected. However, I will not mortify my vanity so far as to suppose it both unexpected and unwelcome.

LATITIA.

How ridiculously grave you look ! How should one know how far your house is from this town ?

SIR CAMERON.

I'll answer you that question, if you will tell me in return, how long this place is to have the honour of harbouring so charming a visiter.

LATITIA.

How all the world seem leagued to embarrass one with direct queries ! My plans are not yet settled, and I don't know how long I may stay. The lease of a house requires some consideration.

SIR CAMERON.

And you will not stint it on that point, I know. But the lease of a house puts deeds, and bonds, and contracts of another kind into one's thoughts : I hope you will not dash any presumptuous hope which a poor bachelor like myself may have entertained, by owning a matrimonial plan in connection with the other.

LATITIA.

A matrimonial plan ! What has a single

woman, who has entered into her thirty-second year, to do with matrimonial plans?

SIR CAMERON.

When the spirit and bloom of five-and-twenty brighten a lady's countenance, I never think of her age. — Well then, matrimony has nothing to do with it?

LATITIA.

No, nothing at all : my house, that is to say, if I do take the lease, will be a cheerful spinster's house, where literati will assemble, amateurs sit in council, curiosities be examined, poems read, and all the bon-mots of the town be repeated ; if I can induce the learned and refined to honour with their society such a humble individual as myself.

SIR CAMERON.

What delightful intercourse ! — with not one word of scandal required to give it zest.

LATITIA.

Not one word.

SIR CAMERON.

And this charming arrangement is determined upon ?

LATITIA.

Absolutely.

SIR CAMERON.

And woe worth the selfish man who should seek to turn aside your mind from such a refined speculation ! He would surely deserve condign punishment.

LATITIA.

Nay, that were judging too uncharitably. He might give one an opportunity of proving the strength of one's resolution, without incurring severe censure.

SIR CAMERON.

But what if he should prove the weakness of it : would he not then deserve to be called a very selfish fellow ?

LATITIA.

I will give hard names to nobody : and I must ask your opinion of another affair, if you will have the goodness to favour me with it. — What had I better do in regard to my little idle nephew ? I should like to give him a good education ; for, idle as he is, he is clever enough : and I should like to avoid all fallacious and useless modes of tuition. I have been advised to have his head examined by the famous phrenologist who is now in the place ; will you do me the favour to be present ?

SIR CAMERON.

I shall have the honour to obey your summons whenever you please.

LATITIA.

Your friends, Brightly and Thornhill, have also promised to be present, and here they come, opportunely.

Enter BRIGHTLY and THORNHILL.

BRIGHTLY.

Away with you, Kunliffe, if you would not be beset by half a dozen of ladies of ton, who have laid their heads together to oblige you to give them a fête-champêtre in your park. They know that you are here; and I have got the start of them only a few paces.

SIR CAMERON.

Thank you! thank you! I hear their voices without; and I would not encounter the clamour of that beldame and her train for the best buck in my park.

Enter three Ladies, as he is about to escape.

FIRST LADY.

Ho, Sir Cameron! stop the fugitive. (*Catching hold of his sleeve.*) You shan't escape till you have heard my speech, as the delegate of all the fair ladies in . Your park, they bid me say, is fairy ground; and they request to be its happy fairies for one day, to dance in its glades, and —— and, I forget the rest. O yes! I am enjoined to say ——

SIR CAMERON.

Nay, my good Madam ; sweet as the sound of your voice may be in my ears, I will trouble you to say no more ; your request is granted.

SECOND LADY.

O how delightfully ready !

FIRST LADY.

The day and the hour, Sir Cameron ?

SIR CAMERON.

The day and the hour which this lady (*pointing to LATITIA*) will do me the favour to name.

FIRST LADY.

No, no ! this is but a subterfuge ; you must name it yourself.

SIR CAMERON.

Pardon me, ladies, pardon me ! Miss Vane will fix the time. I am obliged to attend an appointment. — Good morning, — excuse me ; good morning. [*Hurries away and exit.*]

THIRD LADY.

He is laughing at us ; I told you it would be so.

FIRST LADY.

But we'll follow him : he must not escape so.
[*Exeunt Ladies.*]

Manent BRIGHTLY and THORNHILL.

BRIGHTLY.

It would require more courage than our friend possesses to keep his ground as a bachelor lord of the manor, near a watering place like this. But what think ye of our bet? There is a life and hilarity in his countenance which assures me your paddock will soon become the orchard-ground of a certain worthy neighbour of yours; I see it very clearly, with all its fruit trees in blossom.

THORNHILL.

We are all sanguine enough where our own advantage is concerned: I see your beautiful Rembrandt as clearly on the walls of my library; and all the connoisseurs of the county peeping at it through their fingers. But let us follow the game. [*Exeunt.*

[*As the last characters disappear, FRANKLIN is seen peeping out from the inner room, and then comes forward.*]

FRANKLIN.

The coast is clear at last. O, if I could catch a glimpse of her now! And here she comes, most fortunately, as if she knew I was waiting for her.

Enter EMMA.

Dear Emma ! I have been secreted in that closet while Sir Cameron, and your aunt, and a crowd of other visitors have been here in succession, which appeared as if it never would end. Now the hurly burly is over, and I am rewarded for my patience.

EMMA.

Ah, George ! Why must I chide you for coming ?

FRANKLIN.

And do you chide me ?

EMMA.

I ought to do it ; you know very well that I ought.

FRANKLIN.

Yes, to come here is foolish : to listen to the sound of your voice ; to catch a glimpse of your figure through the shrubs as you play with your brother in the garden ; to follow your carriage with mine eyes, and feel its very track on the sand like a talisman or charm to the fancy, is all very foolish, but a folly that is incorrigible.

EMMA.

We must try, however : consider well that my fortune is very small.

FRANKLIN.

I cannot consider this ; but I ought to consider that my own is still smaller.

EMMA.

And whatever I have, I shall divide with my brother ; for he is a posthumous child, and has not one farthing of his own.

FRANKLIN.

I should deserve to be a slave in the galleys, could I wish thee to be one jot less generous.

EMMA.

With prospects so precarious and so distant, ought we to be often together, or to enter into any engagement ?

FRANKLIN.

As far as incessant application to my profession can make them less precarious, I will toil ; — no, no, I may not call it *toil* ; — the patriarch's servitude for her whom he loved was sweet to him, and seemed but a few days.

D D 2

EMMA.

I dare not enter into engagements.

FRANKLIN.

Thou shalt not ; I will be engaged and thou shalt bē free.

EMMA.

That is impossible : we may both change ; I cannot injure thee so far.

FRANKLIN.

How injure me ? I will be the happier all my life for having loved thee, if I could only once know that I had ever been dear to thee : I would not change such happiness to —to —

EMMA.

To be made Chancellor of England.

Enter SIR CAMERON behind, and observing them in earnest discourse, coughs loud several times to give them notice of his presence, without effect, and then comes forward.

SIR CAMERON.

How very easy it would be to play the eaves-dropper at this interesting moment, when things

might be spoken not unwelcome to a curious ear.—Thou art a happy fellow to engage such unbroken attention from such an auditor.—You are both too grave to answer me. Yet I would have you to know, that I have been made a confidant in affairs of the heart, ere now.

EMMA (*aside to FRANKLIN*).

Conceal nothing from Sir Cameron, but permit me to retire. [*Exit.*]

SIR CAMERON.

She whispered in your ear as she went.

FRANKLIN.

“Conceal nothing from Sir Cameron” were the words.

SIR CAMERON.

Gentle, confiding creature! and wilt thou obey her? thou wilt not. Thou wilt just tell me what is perfectly convenient, and no more.

FRANKLIN.

Nay, nay, cousin; you wrong me. I will obey her thoroughly, and I sha’n’t tire you with a long story neither.

SIR CAMERON.

Well, then, you shall walk home with me, and tell it by the way.

FRANKLIN.

I have left my hat in the little room. I'll join you immediately. [*Exit.*

SIR CAMERON (*alone*).

Kind, simple, confiding creatures ! He, too, so frank and open ! I love them both : ay, and I will behave nobly to them.

Re-enter FRANKLIN with his hat.

FRANKLIN.

I must first run to the post-office for a letter I expect to receive ; but don't stop for me ; I'll join you at the end of the street.

SIR CAMERON.

You have no love correspondence in any other quarter, I hope.

FRANKLIN.

How can your mind harbour such a thought ?

SIR CAMERON.

The mind of one who has lived long in the world is often forced to give harbour to many an unwelcome thought.

FRANKLIN.

The letter I expect is from no fair lady, but from worthy Mr. Harding.

SIR CAMERON.

Ha ! what have you to do with Mr. Harding ?

FRANKLIN.

I have had to do with him lately as a solicitor.

SIR CAMERON.

And on some serious business, no doubt.

FRANKLIN.

Serious enough for me ; — the piecing up of all the rags and remnants of that poor garment, my patrimony, that my shoulders may not be entirely bare, till my own industry shall earn for me another covering. [*Exit.*

SIR CAMERON (*alone*).

Harding his solicitor ! Ha, ha ! I like not this. Can it be only concerning his own little remnants of property ! — It may be so ; I will not doubt his word. — I hate all unreasonable suspicion. — I shall hear his story, and I shall touch upon the subject of Harding afterwards. I shall watch his looks ; and if he really know any thing of the flaw in that bungled deed, I shall find it out. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *The Library in SIR CAMERON KUNLIFFE's House.*

Enter MASTER LAWRY and the Housekeeper, speaking as they enter.

HOUSEKEEPER.

And you are come so far from home, Master, to look at a picture-book—the book of ships, eh?

LAWRY.

And is that very surprising?

HOUSEKEEPER.

To be sure one need not be much surprised; for boys will wander for the very love of wandering; it is all one as though it made a part of their day's work.

LAWRY.

Ay, so they will; and now give me the book, and turning over the leaves of it will make another part of my day's work.

HOUSEKEEPER.

But are you sure, young Sir, that Sir Cameron gave you leave to look over them books?

LAWRY.

Why should I tell a lie about it?

HOUSEKEEPER.

To be sure it would be letting the devil have too good a bargain.

LAWRY.

Yes ; lying for a small matter is great unthrift ; yet I have heard of a woman, who called herself ten years younger than she was, to make her age a proper match to her rose-coloured top-knot. (*Looking archly at her head-dress.*)

HOUSEKEEPER.

Say what you please, young master ; but if Sir Cameron gave you leave to look at his books when he is absent, it is what he never allowed to any one before.

LAWRY.

I did not say he gave me leave to look at them in his absence.

HOUSEKEEPER.

And what if he should return suddenly, and find you turning over his books ? that would make a fine rumpus, I trow.

LAWRY.

Would he punish me ?

HOUSEKEEPER.

No, Sir, it is me that would be punished ; I should lose my place and be ruined.

LAWRY.

Nay, nay ! don't be distressed, good Madam : I will take all the blame on myself, and say that I entered in spite of you.

HOUSEKEEPER.

That excuse would not pass with him ; he would discharge me all the same. Heaven knows what trouble I have to keep my situation here.

LAWRY.

Then I'll go directly, and see the pictures another time : don't be so distressed, my good ma'am.

HOUSEKEEPER.

Well, thou art a sweet creature after all, and I will run some risk to please thee. (*Taking a book from the shelves and laying it on the table.*)

LAWRY.

O thank you, thank you ; how good you are. (*Begins to turn over the leaves.*) What a gallant ship, with her sails set and her colours flying ! I wish I were aboard of her.

HOUSEKEEPER.

Stop, stop ; as I'm a Christian woman, your fingers are all smeared with lollypops.

LAWRY.

Then you are no Christian woman, for that is the stain of black cherries, and my hands have been washed since I ate them.

HOUSEKEEPER.

Let us make sure of it, however. (*Takes a handkerchief from her pocket and rubs one of his hands, while with the other he attempts to pull the smart bow from her cap.*) Mischief to the very core of thee! Yet thou art a sweet creature too; and much pleasure may you have with your book. [*Exit by an opposite door.*

[*While LAWRY is busy with his book, SIR CAMERON's voice is heard without, and he starts from the table, puts the book in its place, and looks round in dismay.*]

LAWRY.

Where can I hide myself? — Ay, that will do. (*Climbs upon the back of a library chair which stands close to a bookcase, and pulls down a map from its roller to conceal himself.*)

Enter SIR CAMERON.

SIR CAMERON.

The air of this day is oppressive; I feel drowsy and tired. (*Sits down in the chair.*) This seat is uneasy, the upholsterer has stuffed it very badly. Let me see. (*Pulls it out from the bookcase, and LAWRY drops down on the floor.*) —

What have we here! — Hiding in my library! — It is Lawry, by my faith. — Get up, child: I hope thou art not hurt. He does not move! torpid as a dormouse! — Ho, there! is nobody at hand? Ho there! (*Rings a bell violently.*) No limbs are broken, I hope.

Enter Servants, and re-enter Housekeeper, all gathering about LAWRY.

HOUSEKEEPER.

A boy in this room, preserve me! how got he here? — Ay, them urchins will scramble and climb, and make their way anywhere like very polecats. He got no entrance here, I'm sure, by the door in a natural way. Dear me, dear me!

SIR CAMERON.

Don't make such a clamour about it: who cares how he entered. Examine whether he be hurt, and I'll despatch a man directly for a surgeon. He must be blooded. [*Exit hastily.*

LAWRY (*starting up from the floor*).

He will be a clever surgeon that finds me here. [*Exit running.*

OMNES.

Let him go, he's a clever imp, — don't hinder him.

Re-enter SIR CAMERON.

SIR CAMERON.

Where is he ? have you carried him to bed.

FIRST SERVANT.

His own legs have carried him off, very nimbly.

SIR CAMERON.

Pursue him, and fetch him back.

HOUSEKEEPER.

It will be to no purpose, Sir Cameron ; and the sooner he gets to his own home the better, for the ladies will be alarmed at his absence.

FIRST SERVANT (*looking out*).

He has cleared the lawn already ; catch him who can.

SIR CAMERON.

Leave me.

[*Exeunt* Servants, *all but the* Housekeeper.

HOUSEKEEPER.

I fear you will be thinking, Sir, that I let him in.

SIR CAMERON.

Leave me, Mrs. Marmalade.

HOUSEKEEPER.

I just want for to say, Sir Cameron ——

SIR CAMERON.

I just want for to be alone.

[*Exit* Housekeeper, *tossing her head*.
That boy has come to the house in my absence for some purpose or other. — Their purpose cannot be good who employ such means to effect it. (*Looking up to the bookcase*.) Concealed behind that map, which he must have unrolled to cover him. Ha! to scramble up to that very shelf where the key of my iron box is concealed behind the pamphlets. — By my faith, and they have been disturbed too. Let me see. (*Standing on the seat of the chair, to examine the upper shelf*.) The key is gone; devil take the cunning little varlet! he has stolen the key. (*Pacing about in a disturbed manner*.) I was surprised to hear that he had transactions with Harding. — I see the whole business now. He knows of the cursed mistake in that testamentary deed. — A base device to get it into his hands for inspection. (*Advances to the front, and stands thoughtfully with his arms across*.) Suspicious! had I not been less suspicious than most people, I should have been aware of it before. — O that there were less cause for suspicion in this vile world! Must we pass through it like infants or simpletons to be happy? what is reason given us for but to be a defence and a guard? — It may, indeed, occasionally deceive us. It may, — it may! that, alas, I know too well. — Oh!

my remembrance of that cruel hour is intolerable. Had I then been as a simple infant instead of a reasoning man, how happy I might have been! (*Beating his forehead.*) Well, well, well! there is no use in thinking of it now. She is happy with another, and prosperous and happy may she be!

Enter HUMPHRIES.

What dost thou want? Did I ring the bell?

HUMPHRIES.

No, your honour; but a servant from Miss Vane is here, and his lady requests you will remember your promise to be present at the examination of Master Lawry's head, and the cranium doctor is to be at her house at four o'clock precisely.

SIR CAMERON.

My best respects to the lady, and I shall have the honour of obeying her summons.

[*Exit HUMPHRIES.*

If the organs of mischief and knavery be not discovered under the curly locks of that little imp, the science, as they deem it, of phrenology is a spider's web to catch flies withal. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

An Ante-room.

Enter HUMPHRIES and a Locksmith, carrying a basket with his tools.

HUMPHRIES.

You may set down your things here a bit, Mr. Cramp, till Sir Cameron rings his bell. — Plague upon it! to make all this ado about nothing. Plague take the whole tribe of suspects and inspectors, with all their cautions, and securities, and contrivances!

LOCKSMITH.

No, no, Mr. Grumbler! you must not say so to a locksmith. My benison upon the whole tribe.

HUMPHRIES.

Yes, truly, thou hast made a pretty penny of it here.

LOCKSMITH.

Not much neither: I have not changed a lock in this house these three months.

HUMPHRIES.

Hast thou forgot the two inner presses in his study, and the escrutoire in his dressing-room ?

LOCKSMITH.

No, but I hope I shall soon ; for one job beats another from my mind.

HUMPHRIES.

Ay, thou thinkest but of one thing at a time. I wish my master would do the same ; for he is not one jot wiser for mixing up so many notions together, like cloaks hung upon a hall-pin, black, blue, and dirty, every one huddled over another : that he is not, I'm sure.

LOCKSMITH.

I wonder such a plain, surly fellow as thou art should keep thy place in his service so long.

HUMPHRIES.

He takes my surliness for honesty.

LOCKSMITH.

And he is not one jot wiser for that, I should reckon.

HUMPHRIES.

No, Cramp ; he is not deceived. But as I am honest, I must be treated like an honest man.

LOCKSMITH.

Certainly ; that is but reasonable. And how

does Mrs. Marmalade contrive to stay here so long? She is neither plain nor surly, I'm sure.

HUMPHRIES.

Oh ! but she has one great advantage over me.

LOCKSMITH.

What is that?

HUMPHRIES.

He sees she is a fool ; and certes, she is the greatest fool that ever had wit enough to keep account of household linen, and overlook the making of pickles and preserves.

LOCKSMITH.

Yes, for certain, she has a great power of words on every occasion, and few of them to the purpose. How has he patience to hear her?

HUMPHRIES.

I'll tell you how : whenever he questions her about any mischance in the family, he knows very well that all she tells him, in the first place, is false, but that it will soon be contradicted as she goes on ; and that what she tells him last will be within a trifle of the truth. Besides, he is amused with her, and she is related to his old nurse. For he is really a kind-hearted man, for all his odd notions and vagaries.

LOCKSMITH.

He is too wise, belike, to think there be any honest folk in the world.

HUMPHRIES.

No, no! he thinks there may be a tithe of honest folk in it, but how to find them out, — that is his perplexity. (*Bell rings.*) Now, he is ready for you : follow me with your tools, and do what you can for this cursed chest, else there will be no peace in the house for a week.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment in the House of LATITIA.

Enter EMMA and DR. CRANY, by opposite sides.

DR. CRANY.

Is it your summons, Madam, I have the honour of obeying?

EMMA.

It is my aunt, Sir, who requested this favour of you, and she will be here immediately. Have the goodness to be seated.

DR. CRANY.

I prefer the position which allows me most

perfectly to contemplate the riches of that beautiful forehead. (*Advancing towards her, while she retreats.*) Music — the music of the soul. Colours — design — comprehensiveness! O! what a rich mine of charming capacity! Pray, permit — (*putting out his hand to raise the hair from her forehead, as she has got to the wall, and can retreat no farther.*)

EMMA (*preventing him*).

Have the goodness, Sir, to stand farther off: it is not *my* head that my aunt wishes you to examine.

Enter LATITIA, *followed by* BRIGHTLY *and* THORNHILL.

LATITIA.

I am infinitely obliged to you, Doctor; but pray take no trouble with the head of this young lady, for her education is finished.

DR. CRANY.

Is education ever finished, my good Madam, while one capacity remains unexplored and uncultivated? Our science is still in its infancy, and therefore the world is still in its infancy; talents wasted — time wasted — tuition wasted — reason wasted.

BRIGHTLY (*aside*).

Ay, there will be a great saving of reason when *it* comes into use.

THORNHILL.

It is a supposed science, Sir, in which yourself and some other distinguished philosophers place much confidence.

DR. CRANY.

A supposed science, Sir ! it is a proved one. Proved by a successive inspection of the skulls of distinguished men, from remote antiquity down to the present day.

THORNHILL.

And how have you procured them ?

DR. CRANY.

We have procured them, Sir, with much labour and very great expense.

BRIGHTLY.

You are very liberal, I dare say, to any person who puts you in possession of a skull that confirms the rules of your science.

DR. CRANY.

Certainly, Sir ; his reward is great, and deservedly so.

THORNHILL.

Yes, Doctor, permission to open the coffins of

the celebrated dead could not be easily obtained ;
the reward must be in proportion.

BRIGHTLY.

And to him who should put you in possession
of a skull apparently adverse to your science,
what would be his remuneration ?

DR. CRANY.

The same, Sir ; when we are assured of the
skull being genuine, we make no difference.
But — which proves the truth of the science —
we have very, very seldom indeed, such a
skull offered to us.

BRIGHTLY.

An indubitable proof, indeed, Dr. Crany ;
I beg your pardon for having insinuated the
slightest doubt. And, as you say, what a saving
of time and of reason there will be, when, instead
of inquiring the past actions and propensities of
a man, you have only to run over his head with
your fingers, and become acquainted with his
character at once.

DR. CRANY.

Exactly so ; and with the ladies' permission
I will tell an anecdote to illustrate the fact.

LATITIA.

Pray do, Doctor ; we are all fond of anec-
dotes.

DR. CRANY.

A man was tried for murder at the Bury assizes ; the evidence was deficient, and the jury retired to deliberate. But a clever phrenologist, having crept to the bar and peeped at the prisoner's head, whose hair happened to be cut very close, descried the organs of destruction of such an appalling size as left no hesitation on the subject, and he could scarcely repress an exclamation, when the door of the jury-box opened; and the foreman pronounced the prisoner not guilty.

THORNHILL.

They decided according to the evidence.

DR. CRANY.

Yes, Sir ; and till the laws of evidence are reformed, they cannot do otherwise. (*LATITIA whispers to EMMA, who retires.*) But my story is not yet finished. Six months afterwards the prisoner committed another murder, for which he was convicted and hanged. Now, had he been hanged for the first offence, he could not have committed the second.

BRIGHTLY.

He must be very contentious, indeed, Doctor, who does not admit that.

[*Re-enter EMMA, lugging in LAWRY, and followed by SIR CAMERON.*]

EMMA.

Come, come, Lawry, make no more wry faces, but kneel down here, and let that gentleman examine your head.

LAWRY.

My head! he will not flog that end of me.

[*The Doctor sits down, and LAWRY kneels.*]

DR. CRANY (*feeling his head*).

The organs of excursiveness : this young gentleman plays truant pretty often.

LATITIA.

O, what a true discovery! he's always running about. Proceed, proceed, if you please.

DR. CRANY.

There is great paucity here in the organs of attention, and those of application seem to be wanting entirely.

LATITIA.

O dear! how true it is! Your art discovers his nature at once. Pray proceed; something else may be discovered that will teach us how to manage him.

SIR CAMERON.

Keep him at home without his dinner till he has learnt his lesson, and he will do well enough.

LATITIA.

Nay, you are rather too harsh, Sir Cameron.

EMMA.

But see, the Doctor has discovered something better now, for his whole countenance is enlightened.

DR. CRANY.

Rejoice, rejoice with me, ladies! the greatest philosopher in England is at my feet.

OMNES.

What is it! What is it?

DR. CRANY.

The organs of mathematics, superb, surprising, superlative. (*Starting from his seat and skipping about in ecstasy*). Such an organ never yet rose proudly under the pressure of this thumb. Have you not frequently seen him tracing figures on a slate — circles, triangles, and such like?

EMMA.

Often enough, Doctor; but the figure he commonly traces is more like a rickety boat with a flag to it than a triangle.

LATITIA.

Kneel again, Lawry; the Doctor may discover something more.

DR. CRANY.

No, I have done; I know him perfectly now.

Keep him at home, and get a mathematical tutor for him immediately.

SIR CAMERON.

Yes, Doctor, excellent advice : keep the runagate at home, and keep him close to his figures and his books.

LAWRY (*crying*).

Keep me to my books! I'll run off with the first band of gypsies that lights a fire on the common. What is all that examining for? You might have known very well that if I would stick to my books I should read, without all this pother.

DR. CRANY.

But you shall have books so suited to your nature, my boy, that you will delight to stay at home and read them.

LAWRY.

Wait till you find such books then ; and I'll stay at home when I like it.

[*Exit, whimpering and muttering.*]

DR. CRANY.

Shall I have the honour to examine the other heads in this good company. (*To LATITIA, in a very ingratiating tone*). Madam, I know that all I shall discover here (*pointing to her head*) must be amiable.

LATITIA.

Excuse me, Doctor, I have not courage.

DR. CRANY (*turning to SIR CAMERON*).

There is no lack of courage here, I presume. Allow me, Sir, to have the honour. What a promising forehead ! those brows, and that fine spreading of the bone !

LATITIA.

Do, Sir Cameron ; pray be examined ; you will oblige me so much.

DR. CRANY (*aside*).

O ! it is Sir Cameron Kunliffe, I find.

BRIGHTLY AND THORNHILL (*speaking at the same time.*)

Do, Kunliffe ; you cannot refuse a lady's request.

LATITIA (*placing a chair*).

Sit down here, and the Doctor will bend over you.

SIR CAMERON (*sitting down*).

If it must be so, I must ev'n submit.

DR. CRANY (*as he examines his head*).

Contemplative — very contemplative ; likes books better than hunting.

LATITIA.

How true !

BRIGHTLY.

Bravo, Doctor !

THORNHILL.

No wizard could have guessed better.

DR. CRANY.

And here are organs that have been well developed ; the — the —

SIR CAMERON.

Don't hesitate, Doctor ; name it, I beg.

DR. CRANY.

The organ of inspection.

BRIGHTLY.

Bravo again, Doctor ! you have a very good name for it ; and if there be such a thing as the organ of suspicion, whereabout does it lie ? for I should think the two are pretty near neighbours.

DR. CRANY.

They are ; but except when much developed, we do not call the last by that name ; we call it suspectiveness.

BRIGHTLY.

Ha, ha, ha ! what nice distinctions ! And, I suppose, the organ of deceptiveness does not lie far off from either.

DR. CRANY.

Excuse me, Sir, as an active quality it stands far apart ; if you mean by it a passive one, we have nothing to do with it.

THORNHILL.

Doctor, you have answered him well.

SIR CAMERON.

But, my good friends, I must have the organ of patience, also, if I am to sit here till you have asked all your fanciful questions. Don't mind them, Dr. Crany, but go on your own way.

[DR. CRANY, *after looking at the back of his head, shrinks from it, and covers his eyes with his hand.*]

LATITIA.

What is the matter, Doctor ? Good heavens ! what is the matter ?

DR. CRANY.

Don't inquire, Madam ; in the prosecution of our science, we are subject to painful revulsions. May I beg a glass of water ?

THORNHILL (*having brought him a glass of water, which he drinks in a languid, affected manner*).

I hope you are better now, and will proceed with what is so very interesting.

DR. CRANY.

Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, I examine no more to-day.

SIR CAMERON (*rising quickly*).

We had better take our leave, and your heads (*to BRIGHTLY and THORNHILL*) may wait for some future occasion. (*Bows to the Ladies, and speaks aside to BRIGHTLY and THORNHILL, as he goes off.*) It is only a feint to get rid of your questions.

[*Exit, followed by BRIGHTLY and THORNHILL.*]

LATITIA.

Good heavens! Dr. Crany, do not keep me in this agony: what have you discovered on the head of Sir Cameron?

DR. CRANY.

Do not inquire, Madam, unless you have some very particular reason for it. — He is not a man to be exasperated. — He is not a man to be trifled with. — He is not a man to be conciliated.

LATITIA.

Is he so dangerous?

DR. CRANY (*looking about*).

Is there no one near us to listen?

LATITIA.

No one ; tell us, for heaven's sake : is he mad ?
is he dangerous ?

DR. CRANY.

It is fearful to think what he is. He has the organ of destruction on his head so strong. — Oh ! half a dozen bloody murders would not exhaust that fearful capacity of mischief. I fear I distress you, ladies, but my duty compels me to it. Be secret, be secret. I dare not remain here ; I will go to my lodgings and try to recover from this very sudden shock. [*Exit.*

LATITIA.

Dear Emma, what do you think of this ? it is terrible.

EMMA.

If it be true.

LATITIA.

Do you doubt it ? You saw how unwilling he was to speak, and the distress he was in.

EMMA.

If the distress was real, he will fly from the vicinity of a man so dangerous.

LATITIA.

Yes, we may judge by that ; let us be secret, and see the result. I must retire to my chamber ; give me your arm. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

A Garden.

Enter SIR CAMERON KUNLIFFE, and walks backward and forward for some time, muttering, before he speaks audibly.

SIR CAMERON.

It will not do; they must try some other device before they get this into their custody. To make me their confidant with such seeming simple honesty, and attempt such a trick after all! I shall be less easily deceived another time.

Enter FRANKLIN.

FRANKLIN.

Walking quarter-deck in this gloomy nook! I have been seeking you every where, all over the grounds.

SIR CAMERON.

And having found me, Sir, what is your pleasure with me?

FRANKLIN.

How is this, Sir Cameron? You seem offended with me.

SIR CAMERON.

Why do you suppose that I am offended ?

FRANKLIN.

Your looks tell me so ; I would gladly interpret them otherwise.

SIR CAMERON.

And you have learned to watch and interpret looks, it seems : you are too young a man for this.

FRANKLIN.

Why, a dog or an infant will do as much.

SIR CAMERON.

Fidelity and affection may do any thing.

FRANKLIN.

If I am destitute of those qualities, I have harboured too long under your roof. (*A sullen pause on the part of SIR CAMERON.*) Farewell, cousin : I shall visit Miss Vane and her niece once more, and then return to town.

SIR CAMERON (*calling after him as he is going off*).

Hark ye, cousin ! you will see Mr. Harding, no doubt, when you are in town ; pray give my respects to him — my very profound respects.

[*Exit* FRANKLIN.]

O, that he had remained as I once knew him ! I should have loved him, I should have taken him to my heart. — Vain wish ! the world is a school

of perversion. (*Walks to and fro again, and then stops.*) Money, thou art truly styled the root of all evil. I should soon, of my own accord, have declared the blunder of that stupid attorney, and should have behaved liberally and nobly. But now, what can I do? It were silliness — it were cowardice to concede. No; I will carry the suit through every court in England first, and live on a crust after all, if lawyers will leave me as much.

Enter THORNHILL.

THORNHILL.

You intended to ride this morning, but I am sorry I cannot accompany you. I have made an engagement with Miss Vane to try the newly discovered organ of her nephew, and will give him his first lesson of mathematics forthwith.

SIR CAMERON.

Ha! put by his aunt under your tuition?

THORNHILL.

Why should this surprise you? it is only an experiment.

SIR CAMERON.

True, true; we are all, now-a-days, busy with experiments: we shall find out, by and by, some new way of giving brains to a dunce, dexterity to awkwardness, boldness to timidity, ay, and stability to the wavering of a fair lady's will. Faith

and truth ! governing and law-making will only be matters of experiment. Make verses on the subject, man, and publish them ; that will be another experiment.

THORNHILL.

Nay, how far rhyme without reason will succeed, is no new experiment.

SIR CAMERON.

But there *will* be reason in it, if thou dost not mar it with thy rhyme.

Enter BRIGHTLY.

THORNHILL.

Welcome, Brightly ; you will help me to deal with this moody man here. Have you any news to tell that may amuse us ?

BRIGHTLY.

To be sure I have. The learned phrenologist has suddenly disappeared from his lodgings ; and Miss Vane and her niece are preparing to set off for town.

SIR CAMERON.

Who told you this ? It cannot be true : the last part of the story cannot be true.

BRIGHTLY.

Yet that is just the part of it that I am most

assured of ; for they are preparing the imperial of her carriage, and horses have been ordered from the inn. If you would have her remain, Kunliffe, you had better go speedily to wish her good-bye.

SIR CAMERON.

Wish her to the devil !

BRIGHTLY.

Wishes are free to every one ; but even that wish may be expressed in a civil manner. — Come away with me, Thornhill : the moody man will deal best with himself ; and I have some curiosity to see that urchin get his lesson of lines and triangles before they go ; for many half hours and half minds may pass away ere his fair aunt is actually in her carriage.

[*Exeunt* BRIGHTLY and THORNHILL.

SIR CAMERON (*alone*).

Preparing to depart ! — No notice given ! — The phrenologist too disappeared ! Yes, yes ; there is some compact in all this. — His sudden illness too, and all those affected grimaces. — Can he have persuaded her, that some terrible propensities are revealed on the surface of my pericranium ; and can she be such a fool as to believe him ? — Ay, ay ; a rich heiress has fallen into the hands of a cunning knave by a weaker device ere now. — I must not linger here : I'll

get to the bottom of this villainy before I rest. — O, this world of knaves and fools ! why was my lot cast in it ? — But, being so cast, shall I become quietly the prey of cunning and deceit ? May I not use similar weapons in self-defence ? — No, no ! let her go : fortune was not my object ; and if she is fool enough to believe him, she is worthy of such a mate. — Yet it makes me distracted. Oh, this perversity of mind ! She is fickle, she is foolish, she is fanciful, she is capricious, and her very faults endear her to my unaccountable feelings. — He shall not have her. — His filthy fingers sprawling over my head for such a villainous purpose : it is abominable. — If deceit will not serve me, force shall.

Enter Housekeeper, with a bundle in her hand.

What brings you here, Marmalade ?

HOUSEKEEPER.

La, Sir ! nothing bad, I'm sure. If she waits at the back garden gate, it is for no bad purpose, I'm sure.

SIR CAMERON.

Who waits there ? Tell me plainly, and in few words.

HOUSEKEEPER.

Lord a' mercy ! why should I make many words about it ? She has done it very badly,

and I don't care who knows what a miserable mantua-maker she is.

SIR CAMERON.

Mantua-maker ! What does all this nonsense mean ?

HOUSEKEEPER.

It is nonsense, for sartain ; and I says to her, says I, " What does it signify making the gown too long, only for to save the cutting of the stuff, when I cannot take one step before me, without trampling it in the dirt ? "

SIR CAMERON.

Is the gown here ?

HOUSEKEEPER.

Yes, Sir Cameron ; and she is waiting at the back gate to take it to be altered.

SIR CAMERON.

Ha ! let me see it.

HOUSEKEEPER (*taking a gown from the bundle*).

I hope you like the colour, Sir : it is gay, but genteel. I never buys nothing that is vulgar.

SIR CAMERON.

Why should you, Marmalade ? People only buy what they want. — And it is too long for you ?

HOUSEKEEPER (*shaking it out*).

A mort too long. The giantess that beats the drum at Middleton fair might wear it and be fitted.

SIR CAMERON.

Give it to me.

HOUSEKEEPER.

To you, Sir Cameron!

SIR CAMERON.

Ask no questions. The gown is mine : carry it back to your own room, and I'll follow you immediately. [*Exit Housekeeper.*] Yes, this will do ; she will provide me with shawl and bonnet besides, and I'll be a match for this cursed philosopher. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.

A Parlour in the House of LATITIA, and the Glass Door of a small Conservatory seen at one side, with a Curtain drawn behind it.

Enter FLOUNCE, who goes to the door, which she opens in silence, giving a key to somebody in the inside.

FLOUNCE (*alone*).

It was well I found the coast clear, and have

given him the key : he may now keep concealed, or come out as he pleases.

Enter LATITIA.

LATITIA.

What wert thou doing in the conservatory? Hast thou left any odd matters there? — But I have changed my mind again, and sha'n't set off till the evening ; so you need not be in a hurry.

FLOUNCE.

I never am, Ma'am ; for the more I hurry myself to obey your directions, the surer it always proves to be of no use.

LATITIA.

'Thou art rather sharp, methinks : something has ruffled thee. What strange awkward rantipole was that I saw thee speaking to a few minutes since in the lane ?

FLOUNCE.

She did not tell me her name, Ma'am ; and I had too little curiosity to ask it. I never speaks when there is no reason for it.

LATITIA.

A good rule, Flounce, which thou observest, with some exceptions. (*Looking off the Stage.*) But look yonder, — a man coming in a strange

stealing manner along the passage : what brings him here ?

FLOUNCE (*turning round and looking*).

No good, I'm sure ; for it is Doctor Crany : I know him by his legs.

Enter DR. CRANY, with his shoulders wrapt in a cloak, and holding his hat before his face.

LATITIA.

Is it possible, my good Sir ? I thought you were ere now many miles hence, — that you considered your life as in danger.

DR. CRANY.

I will account for my being here ; but to your ears alone can I explain it.

LATITIA (*after motioning to FLOUNCE, who goes off*).

And now, Sir, if you please.

DR. CRANY.

That I considered my life in danger is true. Ay, too truly in danger from the offence I must have given to a man with such destructive propensities.

LATITIA.

And why did you venture nevertheless to remain ?

DR. CRANY.

Ah, dearest Miss Vane! can you ask that question? do not my eyes — my fond languishing eyes answer it plainly, and tell you that I could not think of saving my own life when the safety of one whom I love far better than myself is concerned.

LATITIA.

You astonish me.

DR. CRANY.

Let me entreat you to remain no longer in the neighbourhood of such a dangerous person. I tremble to think of it.

LATITIA.

What can I do?

DR. CRANY.

Fly with me this very night. Fly with a man who loves, who adores you, whose whole life shall be devoted to your happiness. (*Kneels at her feet.*)

LATITIA (*recoiling from him indignantly*).

Off, base deceiver! you have betrayed yourself; and thank Heaven you have! I see your purpose now: you have slandered a worthy gentleman for your own selfish ends.

DR. CRANY.

Slandered, Madam! do you believe that the organs of murder are not really on his head?

LATITIA.

No, Sir; neither that nor any bad thing do I believe of him.

DR. CRANY.

Have patience for a moment: I cannot suffer you to run upon your own destruction. I implore — I beseech you for your own safety! my chaise is at the gate: if the present opportunity is neglected —— (*Catching hold of her gown.*)

LATITIA.

Unhand me; let me go, or I will alarm the house, and bring some one to my assistance.

[SIR CAMERON KUNLIFFE, *bursting from the conservatory in woman's dress, shows himself, but hesitates to advance.*]

LATITIA.

O come, come, good Madam, come nearer.

DR. CRANY (*turning round and perceiving SIR CAMERON*).

Good Madam! and what is your pleasure here, good Madam?

SIR CAMERON (*in a feigned voice*).

My pleasure is that you release that lady's hand from your unworthy hold: touch but the

tip of her finger or the hem of her garment, if you dare ; I will not permit the smallest breach of decorum in my presence.

DR. CRANY.

You are a lady of an extreme delicacy, undoubtedly.

SIR CAMERON.

Yes, Sir, of a delicacy which must not be offended.

DR. CRANY.

I plainly perceive, Madam, that yours is entirely of that description. I have the honour to obey your commands. (*Stepping backward and bowing low.*)

SIR CAMERON (*advancing on him with a deep, awkward curtsey*).

You are extremely polite, Sir ; I have the honour to thank you for your ready obedience.

DR. CRANY (*stepping farther back and bowing as before*).

My obedience to you, Madam, expresses my deference to the sex of whom you are the worthy representative.

SIR CAMERON (*advancing as the other retreats, and curtseying again*).

Say rather, that part of the sex to whom

gallants like yourself pay their readiest obedience.

DR. CRANY (*still retreating*).

As you please, Madam, and I wish you good day.

SIR CAMERON.

No, no, Sir, your company is too agreeable ; I will not part with it so soon.

(*Taking hold of his collar, and dragging him back to the front of the Stage.*)

DR. CRANY.

Devil take her ! she has the grasp and the power of a moss-trooper.

Enter BRIGHTLY.

BRIGHTLY.

What uncouth sight is here ; is there masquerading in the house ?

LATITIA.

Indeed, there is some appearance of it. This lady has come unexpectedly, and has done me unspeakable service ; for which I know not how to thank her enough.

BRIGHTLY.

But she steals away and avoids your acknowledgments.

LATITIA.

My good Madam, you will not leave me so soon.

SIR CAMERON.

Permit me to go out to the open air ; I am faint and languid.

BRIGHTLY.

You had better put off your head-gear ; that large bonnet, with so much hooding and muffling under it, would exclude the free air from your face, though you were on the top of Mount Ararat. Permit me to assist in removing it. (SIR CAMERON *puts out his hand to prevent BRIGHTLY, and says something indistinctly.*) You speak with such a soft, pretty voice, lady, that I don't know one word you say.

LATITIA (*aside to BRIGHTLY*).

She is observant of forms, and will not have a gentleman's assistance. (*Aloud to SIR CAMERON.*) Let me take off your bonnet, if I can reach it. (SIR CAMERON *stoops, and she removes the bonnet.*) And this handkerchief, too (*takes off a handkerchief*), and a great cap besides. What's under all this !

SIR CAMERON (*calling out in his own voice after DR. CRANY, who is about to steal away*).

Look to Dr. Crany there, don't let him steal off.

OMNES.

Sir Cameron, — Sir Cameron disguised !

BRIGHTLY (*to* SIR CAMERON).

How had you patience to endure all these trammels ?

SIR CAMERON.

I have been too fortunate under them to feel impatient, but help me, an thou wilt, to get rid of them now. (*Putting off his female attire, assisted by BRIGHTLY.*) But where is the doctor ? don't let him steal off.

DR. CRANY (*advancing*).

No, Sir ; you need have no apprehension that I shall steal off, as you are pleased to term it. I am too bold in my conscious innocence, and in the principles of an incomparable science, to shrink from defending both. Have I not already given proofs of its truth and usefulness in the discovery I have made of the talents of that unmanageable boy ? — who may now be cultivated, from a mere vacant idler, into one of the deepest philosophers of the age.

Enter THORNHILL.

BRIGHTLY.

Here comes his tutor, very opportunely, to corroborate your assertions, Dr. Crany. (*To*

THORNHILL.) And pray what report have you to make of the wonderful capacity of your pupil?

THORNHILL.

I have little to say on that subject.

[*A book is thrown after him from without.*]

BRIGHTLY.

And even that little need not be said. (*Picking up the book.*) This dishonoured Euclid tells the tale plainly enough.

Enter LAWRY (*chased by* FLOUNCE).

FLOUNCE.

Come away to your room, Master Lawry: O fy, fy! I beg pardon, Madam, for coming after him, but he gets worser and worser than ever, since that heathenish book there was put into his hands.

DR. CRANY.

I cannot suffer this defamation. Come here, young Sir, and I will show the organs of mathematics on your head of a most prominent and promising size. (*To* FLOUNCE.) Pray make him stand still one moment, if you please. (*FLOUNCE takes hold of* LAWRY, *while the Doctor parts his hair with his fingers, and shews a lump.*) There, gentlemen, you see it with your own eyes; a more superb organ never met the sight or the touch of a phrenologist.

FLOUNCE.

Lord help you, doctor! that is the lump that came but the other day, after a blow from the bat-ball: two pennyworth of the oil of rosemary would send it away in no time at all.

DR. CRANY.

Well, well; there is no contending with prejudice, and the sooner I take my leave the better;—if I am not to be considered as under constraint. (*Bowing affectedly to SIR CAMERON.*)

SIR CAMERON.

You have my good leave now, learned Sir, to go where you please.

BRIGHTLY (*to DR. CRANY as he retires*).

But won't you wait for a guard of protection, good Doctor, being in the neighbourhood of so tremendous an enemy?

[*Exit DR. CRANY, bowing on either hand as he retires.*]

LATITIA.

Nay, Mr. Brightly, let him off peaceably with no more taunts: I believe he has great faith in his art, though he abuses it for his own base purposes. I thank you all: to you, Mr. Thornhill, I am greatly obliged. And what shall I do now with this unruly boy? Why was I left guardian to such a creature?

LAWRY.

Never trouble your head about me, aunt ; I can handle a rope and climb to the mast-head, and look over a hundred leagues of ocean, and visit far-off shores, as well as any boy.

LATITIA (*kissing him*).

My dear creature, my dear boy ! that were a hard life for thee ; thou art too good for this.

LAWRY.

Not a whit, not a whit ! Am I too good for what Lord Nelson has done before me ?

[*Exit skipping and bounding lightly.*]

LATITIA.

And now, credulous dupe as I have been, will you pardon me, Sir Cameron ?

BRIGHTLY (*preventing SIR CAMERON from speaking*).

Allow me to answer for you, Kunliffe, or you will mar your present advantage. (*To Miss VANE.*) You cannot surely expect, my dear lady, to be let off with impunity. Say your own self what amends he ought to have : pronounce your own punishment, and it shall be immediately inflicted.

LATITIA.

How provoking you are, Mr. Brightly ! how

can I pronounce or think of any thing immediately? Do you determine it.

BRIGHTLY.

You give me leave to do so, on the spot, then?

LATITIA.

O no, no! not immediately.

BRIGHTLY.

I beg pardon, Madam, immediately is a position you dislike: I shall take time to consider; and, at your tea-table, in the evening, it shall be pronounced.

SIR CAMERON.

Round which, I presume, we are all invited to assemble.

LATITIA.

Most assuredly; I request all present to do me that honour. Excuse me now; I must retire: the thoughts of my own folly make me quite bewildered and unwell. [*Exit.*]

BRIGHTLY.

She must have a bad time of it, I think, if she sicken on every new proof of her folly. (*Half aside to THORNHILL*).

SIR CAMERON (*overhearing and turning to him sharply*).

The caustic of thy tongue is intolerable: her

worst fault is indecision ; and if she were wiser than she is, who would like her the better for it ?

BRIGHTLY.

Not you, I can plainly perceive. (*Aside to THORNHILL, as SIR CAMERON hurries off*). Those words augur well, methinks, for my paddock.

THORNHILL.

Don't bespeak your fruit trees, however, till you have won it. But let us follow him and learn all that happened while he was under that absurd metamorphosis.

BRIGHTLY.

Ay, let us do so ; I have a great curiosity to know every thing about it. Who would have thought of his dignity compromised under a mantua and petticoat ?

[*Exeunt after SIR CAMERON.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A small Parlour in the House of LATITIA; enter EMMA, and walks about thoughtfully; presently enter FRANKLIN by another door.*

FRANKLIN.

How fortunate I am to find you here!

EMMA.

How so? you seem agitated.

FRANKLIN.

I have been sculking about the premises for a chance of your coming into the garden, that I might see you before I set off.

EMMA.

Set off! where are you going?

FRANKLIN.

Anywhere, for I cannot stay longer here.

EMMA.

What is the matter? Cannot stay?

FRANKLIN.

I cannot stay a moment longer in Sir Cameron's house, and I don't like to go to another,

which might give him pain. He has got a strange crotchet into his head about some key or other, and I don't know what besides, and he has spoken to me very unkindly.

EMMA.

I am sorry for it. But it will soon pass away. Those who are naturally suspicious are often unkind, and repent it afterwards.

FRANKLIN.

And why should I linger here, only to strengthen what is but too strong already — an adversary, which for your sake, dearest Emma, as well as my own, ought to be kept in check. Blessings on you, my sweet and generous friend ! Only say that I may again visit you when you come to town with your aunt, and I will take my leave as cheerly as I may.

EMMA.

Surely you won't go now, when we are all assembling round my aunt's tea-table, on matters of great importance, and you are one of the invited, you know. Be as testy with Sir Cameron as you please, but surely she deserves more courtesy at your hands.

FRANKLIN.

And shall have it too, if it be a courtesy which she will be pleased with, and her little niece does not forbid. I think I hear them assembling ;

they are merry without. — Poh, poh ! I care not a fig for Sir Cameron.

EMMA.

You will join us by and by ; I must go now to be useful.

FRANKLIN.

And I'll be useful too. I'll pour out the tea for you, Emma. That little delicate hand has not strength enough to lift a heavy teapot over all the circle of cups and saucers that wait for the fragrant stream from its bountiful spout. Care for Sir Cameron ! No ; I care for nobody now.

EMMA.

You will join us by and by, then ?

FRANKLIN.

Nay, I will go with you now, and lead you in boldly before them all. (*Offering his arm.*)

EMMA.

You are bold, of a sudden.

FRANKLIN.

I am bold or timid at any time, as the influence of my little governess inspires.

[*Exeunt, and as they go off, FLOUNCE enters by the opposite side with a great nosegay of flowers in her hand, and stands gazing after them, before she speaks.*]

FLOUNCE.

Ay, poor young things ! you must have patience : matrimony is a very pretty thing, but it will not knock at your door at this bout.

Enter Butler, stealing behind her.

BUTLER.

And at whose door will it knock at this bout ?

FLOUNCE.

What is that to you, Mr. Long-ears ; you may guess.

BUTLER.

One, mayhap, at whose door it will not have to wait : ready entrance to the long expected may be depended upon.

FLOUNCE.

Long expected ?

BUTLER.

Yes ; and how long, Mrs. Flounce ? Some ten or fifteen years, or thereabouts ?

FLOUNCE.

Say fifteen, an you will ; what is that to my mistress ?

BUTLER.

O, it is your mistress you are thinking of.

FLOUNCE.

And who was it you were thinking of, I should be glad to know ?

BUTLER.

Not so very glad, neither, were I to answer "of the mistress's maid."—Well, well ; don't look so grave. It is your mistress's door, then, that matrimony is now knocking at ; but why should you be so pert upon it ?

FLOUNCE.

I am forgetting my flowers.

BUTLER.

I'll arrange them for you, and carry them to the drawing-room presently. In the mean time, tell me why you are so pert upon this marriage ; it won't mend the profits of your place. (*Taking the nosegay from her, and arranging them in a pot on a side-table while she speaks.*)

FLOUNCE.

No ; but it may prevent my profits from being reduced. If she would remain as she is, with her lovers, and her confidants, and her flatterers, and her concerts, and her parties, and all proper suitable things that a rich lady ought to have, I should ask no better ; but if she takes it into her head that a lady of thirty should give up gay dressing, and apply to her learning, and become a book-fancier, and a blue-stocking virtuoso,

what's to become of my perquisites ? It would make your hair stand on end, to hear all the nonsense I have heard about them there books.

BUTLER.

My hair makes no stirring at all when nonsense is spoken. It would have a restless time of it else in this family ; so pray tell me.

FLOUNCE.

And, will you believe it — whole shelves filled with great vollums ; and some of them — fiend take them ! — with as much silk, gold, and vellum on their backs as would buy a gentlewoman a good gown.

BUTLER.

That will take nothing away from you, will it ?

FLOUNCE.

The man's an ass altogether ! — If my lady gives twelve guineas for the binding of an album, as they call it, and hundreds for prints, and old stones, and rubbish, and rattletraps beside, what good will that do to me ? when, I dare say, she'll scrub off her wardrobe, and go about at last, as my Lady Blackletter does, in a gown that our curate's wife would scarcely put on when she goes visiting amongst all the poor sickly bodies of the parish. I knows very well how it would be ; so I hope marriage is now really at hand, to save us from worse.

BUTLER.

I hope so, too, Mrs. Flounce; for I fear the fine books might injure the cellar as well as the wardrobe.

FLOUNCE.

O never fear that; she would have poets and ancient philosophers coming about her in plenty, and they like a good dinner and good wine as well as any body; much better than lovers do, I trow. But we must gossip no longer here; you have set out the flowers beautifully; so take them to the drawing-room directly.

[Exeunt severally, Butler carrying the flowers.]

SCENE II.

A narrow Passage running along the front of the Stage.

Enter Footman and a Boy, crossing and jostling one another.

FOOTMAN.

Stupid oaf! what makes you run so?

BOY.

The gentlefolks want more bread and butter.

FOOTMAN.

Deuce choke them ! is all that was provided for them done already ? and Master Lawry gone to bed too. I hope they want nothing else ?

BOY.

Oh, but they do ! they wants more cream and more cups and saucers.

FOOTMAN.

The devil they do ! they will never have done wanting. (*Bell rings.*) And they are as impatient as the Grand Turk : make haste, you oaf.

[*Giving Boy a kick as they hurry off and exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Scene opens, and discovers SIR CAMERON KUNLIFFE, BRIGHTLY, THORNHILL, LATITIA, EMMA, and FRANKLIN beside her, occasionally employed in pouring out tea, &c., seated round a Table, while laughing and talking is heard as the Scene opens.

SIR CAMERON.

Ha, ha, ha ! and all that passes upon you, my good Thornhill, for disinterested generosity.

THORNHILL.

And what should it pass for ?

SIR CAMERON.

Some expectation of a legacy, perhaps, from that old Lady Bountiful of the neighbourhood, who would like to enrich such an amiable philanthropist.

THORNHILL.

But that old lady was dead, Kunliffe.

SIR CAMERON.

O what a loss to the toppers at the Cat and Bagpipes ! for they will now be obliged to support their own families and drink less.

EMMA.

Don't be so hard-hearted, Sir Cameron.

BRIGHTLY.

You must make some allowance for one who holds a justice-court every Friday, and has all the misdoings of the parish brought before him.

THORNHILL.

Where, thanks to his natural gift of suspectiveness, he detects as much knavery, and dispenses as prompt justice, as the sage governor of Barataria.

EMMA.

And there is a droll look on his face at this moment, as if some curious case had been lately before him.

LATITIA.

Is it so, Sir Cameron? Do tell us about it.

SIR CAMERON.

As it proves the ingenuity of your sex and the simplicity of ours, you shall have it. A country girl appeared in court the other day, who would oblige the booby son of a small farmer to marry her, because, on his account, she had refused the addresses of a very advantageous match.

EMMA.

And how did she prove that?

SIR CAMERON.

By calling upon the booby to declare that he had listened at the window of an old malt-house, and heard the shrill voice of his mistress in earnest discourse within with a gruff-voiced man, whose offers of marriage she refused very saucily, on account of her attachment to himself, poor simpleton.

BRIGHTLY.

And whether do you call him simpleton, for believing his own ears, or for giving evidence against himself?

SIR CAMERON.

For the first, assuredly. What one believes as a fool, one is bound to declare as an honest man. And he would have smarted for his honesty, too,

had it not been for the accidental intrusion of a plough-boy, who at the moment slipt softly into the said malt-house, and discovered, that though two voices had issued from the house, there was but one person within.

BRIGHTLY.

Clever hussy ! she deserved a husband for the trick.

SIR CAMERON,

And she should have had one suited to her merits, could I have transferred to her a smart-looking fellow, who had eloped with the prettiest girl in the parish, on the evening of her wedding-day, just to take her out of his friend the bridegroom's hands, as he gallantly stated it.

LATITIA.

I think he was mated very suitably with the woman he eloped with. The bridegroom was well quit of her ; she was not worth contending for.

SIR CAMERON.

Yes ; but it was not for her they contended. No, truly ; the matter to be decided was, whether the man who had lost the bride, or the man who had got her, should pay the expenses of the wedding dinner.

LATITIA.

Oh, the worldly creatures !

EMMA.

But to return to the old subject of fashions, Mr. Brightly, which was interrupted by Mr. Thornhill's admiration of his friend's liberality.

BRIGHTLY.

Well, then, I ventured to say something, didn't I, against the short bunchy skirts and wide bladder-sleeves of the present belles, who seem to make a mock of their grandmothers for aiming to appear tall and slender.

EMMA.

But their heads are dressed more simply, and their characters are altogether more unaffected and natural and unpretending.

BRIGHTLY.

Not a jot ; such a woman as fourscore years ago would have been seen at a public sale with a wide-flounced farthingale and a lapdog under her arm, bidding for a China mandarin, is now to be met with at a morning lecture, with pencil and note-book in hand, losing two words of the learned professor's discourse for every one she writes down.

LATITIA.

Nay, fie upon you for a discourteous knight ! Do you come here on the summons of a lady to attend her tea-table, for the express purpose of casting ridicule on the whole sex ?

BRIGHTLY.

I thank you, Miss Vane, for reminding me of the purpose which brought me here ; and the more so, that it is to hold judgment on yourself. But it cannot be done in this informal lazy manner ; let every body stand round me, that I may open the proceedings with official decorum.

[They all rise from the tea-table and arrange themselves on the front of the Stage.]

LATITIA VANE, Spinster, is called for.

LATITIA.

Present in the court.

BRIGHTLY.

You compeer before me, charged with high crimes and misdemeanors committed against the King's liege subject, Sir Cameron Kunliffe, Baronet, tending to the great injury of his character, to the impeding his usefulness in the country, and to the destroying of his influence in social society.

LATITIA (*holding up her hands*).

What a wicked creature I must be ! But how do you make it to appear against me, my Lord Justice ?

BRIGHTLY.

It is proved against the defendant, that on the

10th day of September of the present year, she sent for a certain phrenologist to her house, pretending to know the dispositions of men by certain marks on the surfaces of their pericraniums, and did wittingly and with malice prepense persuade the said Sir Cameron to submit his head to be examined by the said phrenologist.

LATITIA.

Wittingly, but not maliciously : had not foolishly been a better word ?

EMMA.

Surely you will change the word so far in favour of the defendant.

BRIGHTLY.

Not a bit : she wittingly entreated him to run the risk, knowing that there was risk, of losing that which, we are told by high authority, is better than gold. Who will live in amity and confidence with one who is scientifically proved to be predisposed to deeds of cruelty and destruction ? Who will be connected with such a one ? who will give his daughter in marriage to such a one ? who will accept of such a predisposed ruffian for her husband ?

LATITIA.

But it is all set right now, and has no evil consequences.

BRIGHTLY.

I beg your pardon, lady : an evil report and its refutation are no fair match for one another. The first runs far a-field with the pace of a race-horse, the second follows after like a poor cud-gelled donkey, and never clears a fourth part of the ground.

EMMA.

You must own, my dear aunt, that this makes against you. I fear you will be obliged to stand in the church porch, with a sheet about you, for defamation.

SIR CAMERON.

That would spread evil report the further.

BRIGHTLY.

The prosecutor speaks reason ; that would be no compensation at all for the injury, and he will not receive it as such.

LATITIA.

What can be done, then, Mr. Justice ?

BRIGHTLY.

When the character of a bachelor is so injured by any woman, that he is, or may be, prevented from finding a suitable mate to solace his days, she is bound — in honour bound — to marry him herself.

THORNHILL.

A reparation, I believe, which they are gene-

rally willing to make : I beg pardon ; I mean, in most cases.

LATITIA.

O dear, dear ! how wide you stray from the purpose !

BRIGHTLY.

That is as it may afterwards appear, lady.

THORNHILL.

He has a sinister intention, Miss Vane.

BRIGHTLY.

Keep silence in Court, I say. — The sinister intention is on his side, who, for his own interest, would prevent you from being just. But I would not press the matter upon you too severely ; the reparation shall be left to your own discretion ; but you must decide upon what it is to be, before the Court break up.

LATITIA.

Decide so soon ! Will not to-morrow do, or the day after to-morrow, or the day after that ?

BRIGHTLY.

No, neither to-morrow nor any following morrow will do ; you must pronounce your own sentence before the Court break up.

LATITIA (*going about in a bewildered manner*).

O, dear! what can I do? what can I say?
how shall I decide?

BRIGHTLY.

Shall I decide for you, Madam?

LATITIA.

Do, do! good Brightly, and don't tease me any more.

BRIGHTLY.

And do you promise to abide by my judgment?

LATITIA.

I do promise: and you will be merciful.

BRIGHTLY.

Well, then, be it known to all present, that inasmuch as you have nefariously injured the worthy baronet aforesaid, and it is your own indecision that prevents you from making him just reparation for the same, I adjudge that you, from this very time (*looking at his watch*), shall remain under his command for five minutes and a half, bound afterwards faithfully to fulfil what in this given time he shall decree.

LATITIA.

Let it be so; five minutes will soon be over, and he will be merciful.

SIR CAMERON.

I fear you will not think so, Madam ; for I command you to marry me to-morrow morning, before eleven of the clock.

LATITIA.

O, shocking haste and precipitation ! Not even a few months allowed to prepare my wedding-clothes !

SIR CAMERON.

Not one hour beyond what I have said.

LATITIA.

How peremptory you are !

EMMA.

The best quality, my dear aunt, that your husband can have to match with your indecision.

LATITIA.

What ! are you against me, child ? It is not for your interest.

EMMA.

It is for my interest if it be for yours ; and let me put this hand, which has always been kind to me, into a stronger hand, that will bear the rule over it in kindness. (*Putting the hand of LATITIA into that of SIR CAMERON, who receives it with gallant respect.*)

SIR CAMERON.

Thanks, gentle Emma ; to find a friend in thee is more than I expected.

EMMA.

Ah, Sir Cameron ! but you should have expected it.

THORNHILL.

If he could, without proof, have supposed any one to be good, it should have been this young lady.

BRIGHTLY.

But he is too wise for that.

SIR CAMERON.

Spare me, spare me ; do not mar my present happiness by making me feel how little I deserve it.

FRANKLIN (*advancing from the rear to* SIR CAMERON).

And may I be permitted to offer, perhaps, unexpected congratulations ?

SIR CAMERON.

Yes, thou mayest, and also advise and devise with my solicitor as much as thou wilt. That matter shall be no longer an annoyance to me.

FRANKLIN.

What matter can you possibly allude to ?

SIR CAMERON.

O! you are quite ignorant of a certain misworded testament, the defects of which, by the management of a clever attorney, might be turned to thine own advantage : thou pleadest ignorant, very ignorant of all this.

BRIGHTLY.

Ha, ha, ha! he will be an impudent fellow indeed if he, before *my* face, plead ignorant of that which he told me without reserve some three or four years ago.

SIR CAMERON.

Is it possible? did Hardy betray me then?
(*To FRANKLIN.*)

FRANKLIN.

No; but his clerk employed to copy the deed repeated to me soon after the very passage, word for word.

SIR CAMERON.

And thou hast known it all this while, and never sought to take advantage of it till lately?

FRANKLIN.

And you have known me all this while, nay, from my childhood, Sir Cameron, and can yet suppose that I should wish to wrest from you by law what natural justice and the intentions of the testator fairly bestow upon you.

SIR CAMERON (*covering his face with his hands*).

Say whatever you please to me : I am humbled to the dust ; my infirmity is crime.

BRIGHTLY.

Since you invite us to say whatever we please, I say that your crime has been punished already ; for you have been oftener cheated and duped by your own supposed knowledge and your distrust of mankind, than the veriest flaxen-headed simpleton in the parish.

SIR CAMERON.

Hold, hold, Brightly ; I will not succumb to thee so meekly. If you have any candour, you must acknowledge I had cause for suspicion. Any man would have been startled at the disappearance of that key after the mischievous urchin had been so strangely secreted in my library.

BRIGHTLY.

Yes, a very strong circumstance, indeed, to justify all this disturbance. Did not you give me a key to let myself out by the small gate of your shrubbery ?

SIR CAMERON.

And what has that to do with it ?

BRIGHTLY.

It would not open the shrubbery-gate, and I

went round another way. (*Giving him a key.*) But, perhaps, it might have opened your strong box. I should have returned it to you sooner, had I not learned from your locksmith, that he had already changed the lock of that most secret repository.

SIR CAMERON.

The very key, I must, with confusion, acknowledge. Is it possible that I should have taken the wrong key from that corner, and that having given a key to you should have entirely escaped my memory?

BRIGHTLY.

Every thing is possible, when the imagination of a suspicious man is concerned.

SIR CAMERON.

I am beaten to the ground! I am lower in my own opinion than my worst enemy would have placed me, or even (*pointing to BRIGHTLY*) this good-natured friend. — Dear Latitia, I am sensible of my infirmity; I am incapable of being a good husband to any woman; and though it has long been my ambition to be yours, I remit your engagement and restore you to your liberty.

BRIGHTLY (*eagerly*).

No, no, no! she is too generous to desert you in your hour of humiliation.

THORNHILL.

Brightly, you are acting unfairly. You have no right to suggest to the lady what she ought to do.

BRIGHTLY.

I don't act unfairly : we were each left at liberty to influence.

LATITIA.

What is the meaning of this altercation ?

BRIGHTLY.

I care not for your paddock.

THORNHILL.

Nor I for your picture ; but let each of them be lost or won fairly.

LATITIA.

What, in the name of wonder, are they disputing about ? (*To SIR CAMERON.*)

SIR CAMERON.

There is a bet in the case, I dare say.

BRIGHTLY (*to SIR CAMERON*).

And if there be, your searching fancy will find it out.

SIR CAMERON.

It concerns my marriage with Miss Vane ;

tricky fellows ! I wish we could contrive to make you both lose.

THORNHILL.

That is impossible ; but at least let us wait till it be absolutely decided. The lady may accept her proffered liberty, or may change her mind, before eleven o'clock to-morrow morning.

LATITIA.

Ay, now is my turn to have my infirmity exposed. But it only convinces me that I am a more suitable match for Sir Cameron, who in his state of humiliation, as he calls it, will learn to have patience with me ; and I restore to him the hand he has released.

BRIGHTLY.

Bravo ! they are an equal match, and a happy union may it prove.

SIR CAMERON (*to* FRANKLIN).

Come hither, cousin. You look less happy than I could wish ; and happy as I now am, I wish to make myself a little happier. I have said that the thoughts of that bungled deed shall annoy me no more. I cannot part with that small estate upon which my mansion is placed, with its park and ancient oaks around it. — But the full value of the whole you shall receive from me, as soon as proper deeds of conveyance,

in which there shall be no mistakes, can be made out.

FRANKLIN.

It is too much, cousin ; I cannot — I cannot receive it.

SIR CAMERON.

Fie upon thee, man ! hast thou an infirmity, too, — the infirmity of pride ? It will promote my happiness : and it may enable thee, as soon as thou art in the receipt of ninety pounds a year from thy profession, to promote thine own, if thou canst prevail upon some good girl to unite her fate with thine. Dost thou wot of such a one ? perhaps thou dost.

THORNHILL (*aside, eyeing FRANKLIN and EMMA anxiously*).

Now is the critical moment to strengthen my hopes or my fear.

[FRANKLIN *approaches EMMA timidly, who motions him away, and he obeys, while THORNHILL, with his face brightening up, goes close to her on the other side.*]

THORNHILL (*aside*).

I see how it is, charming Emma ; and may it not encourage me to hope that the engaging child from whose innocent head I cut off this fair

curl (*taking from his breast a paper*) some ten years ago, will now, in her womanhood, show me some favour?

BRIGHTLY (*overhearing him*).

You have a very soft voice, Thornhill, but my ears are quick. What is the meaning of these gentle approaches?

EMMA (*to THORNHILL*).

Can my memory be so treacherous? Have we ever met before last spring, when I saw you in Brook Street?

THORNHILL.

Yes, gentle creature, I saw you at your uncle's in Cheshire, where you were my harmless playfellow, and I became, by your own consent, possessed of this cherished token, (*turning to FRANKLIN, who goes up to him sternly,*) which shall be taken from me only with my life.

BRIGHTLY.

Thornhill, thou art making a fool of thyself. The pretty child who was thy playfellow, and on whose head that curl once grew, bears indeed the same name with this lady, is her cousin, and has a strong resemblance to her, but is, I believe, at this moment in Rutlandshire, collecting pretty poesies for her album. Send her one of thy

sonnets, and thou wilt stand in as great favour with her as ever.

THORNHILL.

Why did you not tell me this before?

BRIGHTLY.

How should I divine all the romantic fancies of thy brain?

SIR CAMERON.

I think his patience in giving that restless urchin lessons from Euclid, might have led you pretty near the truth.

BRIGHTLY.

To be sure it might have done so, had Nature endowed me with the organ of suspectiveness.

SIR CAMERON.

Say no more upon that subject, I beseech you. Any blackguard may henceforth pull my watch from its pocket, and I will only suppose that he wants, as the crowd presses round, to see what it is o'clock, poor youth!

LATITIA.

And I will be so constant to my purpose, that the most methodical lady of a parish district may make an appointment with me, and be sure of my being at her door, as her household clock gives warning for the hour. I will not even

change the colour of a scarf or a top-knot, having once said to my milliner, "It shall be this."

BRIGHTLY.

But how long will it be ere you have said so, when all the other colours of the rainbow are laid in array before you?

LATITIA.

No more sarcastic insinuations ! Sir Cameron and I will endeavour to reform ; and a good beginning is equal to half the task, when there are kind friends to give encouragement.

[The Curtain drops.]

A P P E N D I X.

APPENDIX.

THE TRAGEDY ON WITCHCRAFT.

THE subject of this drama was first suggested to me by reading that very curious and original scene in the "Bride of Lammermuir," when the old women, after the division of largess given at a funeral, are so dissatisfied with their share of it, and wonder that the devil, who helps other wicked people willing to serve him, has never bestowed any power or benefits upon them. It appeared to me that the gifted author had come within one step of accounting for a very extraordinary circumstance, frequently recorded in trials for the crime of witchcraft, — the accused themselves acknowledging the crime, and their having had actual intercourse with Satan and other wicked spirits. This was a confession that was sure to be followed by a cruel death, and the conjectures produced to account for it have never been satisfactory. It has been supposed that, previously to their trial, from cruel treatment and misery of every kind, they desired to have an end put to their wretched existence, even at the stake. But this is surely not very probable; for, if a fair trial by unprejudiced judges acquitted them of the crime, — a circumstance not likely to happen, — it was still in their power to get rid of life in the first river or pond deep enough to drown them, or by some other means less dreadful than fire and faggot. Neither can it be supposed that such confessions, at least all of them, were made in a state of delirium. It is more reasonable to suppose that some of those unhappy creatures, from the state of their minds, and from real cir-

cumstances leading to it, actually did believe themselves to have had intercourse with the Evil One, consequently to be witches ; and the design of the play is to illustrate this curious condition of nature. Soon after the publication of that powerful and pathetic novel, I mentioned my thoughts upon the subject to Sir W. Scott, and urged him to pursue the new path he had just entered into. That I was unsuccessful in my suit, and failed to persuade him to undertake the subject, all his warm admirers — and who are not? — must regret, — a regret that will not be diminished by the perusal of the Tragedy on Witchcraft. The language made use of, both as regards the lower and higher characters, is pretty nearly that which prevailed in the West of Scotland about the period assigned to the event, or at least soon after it ; and that the principal witch spoke differently from the other two, is rendered probable from her being a stranger, and her rank in life unknown. Even in those days the well-educated classes were distinguished from their neighbours on the south side of the Tweed, by their accent and pronunciation, rather than any actual difference of words.

The story is entirely imaginary, one circumstance excepted, viz. the piece rent from the gown of the supposed witch, produced in court as a proof that she had actually been present, though invisible, in the chamber of the tormented patient,—a real circumstance, mentioned, I believe, in one of the trials for witchcraft, though I forget where.

NOTE TO "THE HOMICIDE."

As it has been thought, by a gentleman professionally conversant on these subjects, that the scene on board of ship is only fitted for a melodrama, and perhaps with justice, I have subjoined what follows, to be substituted in its room by any manager of a theatre, who may be of the same opinion, and who may, at the same time, consider this drama as worthy of representation. The simplest way, no doubt, would have been to have omitted the objectionable part altogether, and to have placed the following scenes in the body of the piece ; but as my own opinion on the subject does not entirely coincide with that above mentioned, I have preferred this mode of removing the difficulty. Since our two principal theatres are of such large dimensions, and possess so many capabilities of effect from scenery and from light, I can see no reason why some of the divisions of a regular drama may not occasionally receive the advantage of such powerful auxiliaries. And, indeed, I am scarcely entitled to call this a regular piece, consisting, as it does, of three acts, and written chiefly in prose, that it might be the better adapted to a large theatre, in which blank verse cannot be so readily understood.

SCENE I.

*The Entrance-hall of a small Inn on the Sea-shore :
knocking heard at the Door.*

Enter Landlady.

LANDLADY.

Who can it be, making such a noise at this untimely hour ?
(*In a loud voice.*) What do you want at this late hour ? and
who are you ?

VOICE (*without*).

I am a storm-beaten, benighted traveller, and shelter for
the night is what I want, good dame ; open your door and
receive me.

LANDLADY.

You travel late for a lone person. (*Opens the door.*)

Enter CLAUDIEN.

Come in, then, and I will do the best I can for you. The
rain must have fallen in torrents, methinks, to put you in this
condition.

CLAUDIEN.

Yes, I have had water enough, good dame ; let me dry
myself by the fire, if there be one still burning in the house.

LANDLADY (*after looking at him steadfastly*).

Preserve me ! is the Mermaid gone a wreck ?

CLAUDIEN.

What sayest thou of the Mermaid?

LANDLADY.

She sailed from port yesterday morning, and my poor boy is on board.

CLAUDIEN.

Where he is still in safety, I doubt not; so make thyself easy, and blow up the embers of thy fire, that I may dry myself.

LANDLADY.

Lord be gracious to me! Did I not see thee embark with the other passengers? — If that ship be sailing on the sea, what art thou? (*He remains silent, and she looks at him still more intently.*) In the name of the blessed Saints, depart from me! thou art nothing now that either fire may warm or roof may shelter. Leave me, in the holy name of St. Francis!

CLAUDIEN.

Nay, if thou deny me succour, in my present condition, thou wilt make a ghost of me, indeed. Let me pass on to the fire, I beseech thee!

[*Exit, passing her quickly, and she follows him, holding up her hands in amazement.*]

SCENE II.

The Sea-shore by early dawn.

Enter Mariners and Passengers, carrying small packages and various matters in their hands.

FIRST PASSENGER.

Thank God we are on dry land again, though we be driven back to the same coast.

FIRST MARINER.

And ship and cargo safe, too ; you may thank me for that.

SECOND MARINER.

Thank thee for it !

FIRST MARINER.

Ay, marry ! had we not lightened our vessel of that unhallowed murderer, she and all she contained would have been, long ere now, at the bottom.

FIRST PASSENGER.

Say no more of that : it makes the blood turn in my veins to think of it. If all the unhallowed part of our living freight had been so disposed of, we should have come to shore most grievously curtailed of our numbers.

Enter Landlady, with a small basket.

THIRD MARINER.

By our blessed Lady ! there comes my mother.

LANDLADY.

My dear boy ! art thou safe ? Thou hast had a sad bout of it on that stormy sea, since I parted with thee yesterday morning.

FIRST MARINER.

Good landlady, we are in want of food and a good fire to warm us by ; show us the nearest way to thy house, which is not far off, as I guess.

LANDLADY (*pointing*).

Hold on your way along the shore, and I'll overtake you presently, when I have gathered a few more of these limpets.

[*Exeunt* Mariners, &c. *Manent only* Landlady and Third Mariner.]

THIRD MARINER.

May the devil choke them with the first morsel they eat!
I wish they would go to any house but thine.

LANDLADY.

Why dost thou say so, my dear boy?

THIRD MARINER.

I'll tell thee a secret, mother; I'll sail with those men no more, if I can effect my escape.

LANDLADY.

What makes thee say so?

THIRD MARINER.

I'll tell thee why, and in few words, too, though it is a story to make one's ears tingle. There was a noble passenger on board, and when the storm raged at its pitch, and we were in jeopardy, some exclamations which fell from his lips made one who stood near him imagine that he must needs be a murderer.

LANDLADY.

Mercy on us! did he own himself such? remorse wrings strange tales from parched lips in the hour of danger.

THIRD MARINER.

He confessed having shed blood, but with no deliberate intention; and I could pawn my life upon it that he spoke the truth. Yet those cowardly devils durst not abide the peril of the storm in his company.

LANDLADY (*tossing up her arms*).

And they cast him overboard!

THIRD MARINER.

Nay: the stoutest of them all durst not lay a finger on him. He kept them off with his drawn sword, till he gained

the prow of the ship, which was driving towards land, and then, raising his arms to heaven (I shall never forget the sight of his noble figure as the passing lightning gave it to our eyes for a moment), threw himself into the deep.

LANDLADY.

It is, indeed, a fearful tale. But he is no murderer, I'll be sworn to it; and he is safe on shore at this moment, where he would never have been, had he done the deed of blood. He is in my house.

THIRD MARINER.

Where those men must not find him. What shall we do?

LANDLADY.

Run thou, and give him notice of their coming; and conduct him, if he pleases, to ———, where he may get on board of some other vessel, and quit the country undiscovered.

THIRD MARINER.

So I will, mother, and go to the world's end with him, too, if he will suffer me.

LANDLADY.

Make haste; and I'll overtake those miscreants, and lead them to the house by any way but the nearest.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

PREFACE TO "THE BRIDE."

To see the mind of a child awaking by degrees from the dreamy indistinctness of infancy to a clearer observation of what he beholds around, and a capacity to compare and to reason on the differences and resemblances he perceives, is a most pleasing and interesting sight; so in a far greater degree does the rousing a race or nation from its infancy of ignorance and delusion, interest and excite every mind of any feeling or reflection. It was from this natural sympathy that I heard with the most sensible pleasure, some months ago, of the intended translation of my Drama, called "The Martyr," into the Cingalese language, as a work which might have some good effects upon a people of strong passions, emerging from a state of comparative barbarism, and whose most effectual mode of receiving instruction is frequently that of dramatic representation, according to the fashion of their country. A gentlemen to whom Ceylon owes the great benefits conferred on a people by the pure and enlightened administration of justice, and to whose strenuous exertions they are also indebted for the invaluable institution of a trial by native juries*, entertained this opinion of the Drama in question, and afterwards did me the farther honour to suppose that I might write something, more peculiarly appropriate to the circumstances of that island, which would naturally have a stronger moral effect on the minds of its inhabitants. Pleased to be made,

* The measures above alluded to are detailed in the Asiatic Journal for June, 1827. They are the different measures which were carried into effect by Sir Alexander Johnston when he was President of His Majesty's Council in Ceylon, and of which Mr. Brougham made honourable mention in his speech on the present state of the law in February, 1828.

in the humblest degree, an instrument for their good, I most readily promised to endeavour at least to do so. And when they read this piece, or when it is brought before them in representation, they will regard it as a proof that their former judge and friend, though now absent and far separated from them, still continues to take a deep interest in their welfare. So considered, it will not fail to make an impression on their minds to which its own power or merit would be altogether unequal.

But should the individual effects of this Drama be ever so inconsiderable, the profits arising from its publication in England may be the means of procuring translations into the Cingalese language of more able and useful works, and make, as it were, a first though a low step towards higher moral eminence. In these days, when many excellent men are striving, at the expense of health and ease, and all that is valued by the world, to spread the light of Christianity in the East; when the lamented Bishop Heber, with the disinterested devotion of an apostle, joined to the mildness, liberality, ability, courteousness, and good sense which promote and grace every laudable undertaking, has proved himself to be the genuine and noble follower of his blessed Master—who would not be willing to lend some aid and encouragement to so excellent a purpose? I hope, and strongly hope, that good will be derived, even from such a feeble effort as the present; and that the time will come when the different races of the East will consider every human creature as a brother; while Englishmen, under whose rule or protection they may live, will condemn that policy which founds its security upon ignorance. All past experience is unfavourable to the unmanly and ungenerous maxim. And in the present time, when perfect undisturbed ignorance cannot be obtained, the preservation of it in a middle state, to take no higher view of the subject, will be found to be a very precarious and expensive means of governing. But do I not wrong my countrymen, connected with the East, in suppos-

ing that the great proportion of them do entertain such narrow views? Of this at least I am thoroughly persuaded; that if such a supposition does not wrong them at present, it will do so grievously some years hence: for the ignorance I speak of is that which stands opposed to the useful, simple learning, which promotes industry and charity. Of those superfluous acquirements which the overstrained refinement of modern plans of education seems anxious to extend to the lower classes of society, I do not speak.

But I must beg leave to retract what I have said above as to making a first step in this desirable progress: one of Mrs. Hannah More's Sacred Dramas was translated into the language of Ceylon several, I believe many, years ago, and was much liked and admired by the natives. A second or third, or any rank, so as it be a step at all, is honour enough for me.

And now let me address a few words to those whom I shall never see, whom many, *many* leagues of ocean divide from any spot of earth on which my foot hath ever rested or shall ever rest; those for whose especial use the following Drama was written, and in whose country the story of it is supposed to have happened.

I endeavour to set before you that leading precept of the Christian religion which distinguishes it from all other religions, the forgiveness of injuries. A bold and fiery-tempered people is apt to consider it as mean and pusillanimous to forgive; and I am persuaded that many a vindictive and fatal blow has been inflicted by those, whose hearts at the same moment have yearned to pardon their enemies. But Christians, who, notwithstanding the very imperfect manner in which they obey and have obeyed the precepts and example of Jesus Christ, do still acknowledge them, and have their general conduct influenced by them, — are *they* a feeble and unhonoured race? Look round you in your own land, in other countries most connected with your own, and you will acknowledge that this is not the case. You will, therefore, I hope, receive in good part the moral of my story.

I wished to have found some event in the real history of Ceylon, that might have served as a foundation for my Drama ; but not proving successful in my search, which, circumstanced as I am, could not but be very imperfect, I have of necessity had recourse to imagination. But there is one person or character in it which is truly your own, though placed in an imaginary situation ; and any country in the world might be proud to claim it.—“Remember,” said the son of the first Adigar of the Candian country to his elder brother, who had clung for protection to his wretched mother, when she and all her children were condemned to death by a late king of Candy, —“remember that we are the sons of a brave man, and should die as becomes his sons ; I will be the first to receive the stroke of the headsman.” The land which hath produced a child so brave and noble, will also, under favourable circumstances, be fruitful of brave and noble men ; and in proportion as her sons become generous and humane, they will also increase in valour and dignity. The little Samar, then, of my play, is what the son of the first Adigar would have been in his place, and as such I commend him to your favour and attention.

The views which I have given of the religion of Juan De Creda are true to all that you will find in the history and precepts of Jesus Christ, whenever you are inclined to read those books of our sacred Scripture which we call the Gospels ; containing his history, and written by men who were his immediate followers and disciples, being eye and ear witnesses of all that they relate ; and let no peculiar opinions or creeds of different classes of Christians ever interfere with what you there perceive plainly and generally taught. It was given for the instruction of the simple and unlearned ; as such receive it.

Wishing you all prosperity, as a brave and virtuous people, —for brave ye are, and virtuous I hope ye will become, — I bid you farewell !

NOTES TO "THE BRIDE."

NOTE I. p. 283.

" With bleeding limbs drain'd by a hundred leeches."

Very small leeches which infest many of the woods of Ceylon, and torment travellers.

NOTE II. p. 392.

—————" *Doombra's mountain ridge,*
" Dividing ardent heat from chilling clouds," &c.

A high mountainous ridge in Ceylon, where the one side is sunny, clear, and warm, the other cloudy, wet, and cold.

NOTE III. p. 299.

" Ev'n like Niwané when the virtuous soul," &c.

The final reward of the virtuous after death, according to the Boodhoo religion, is perfect rest or insensibility; and that state, or the region in which it takes place, is called Niwané.

NOTE IV. p. 329.

" When Boodhoo's rays, beneath the noon's blue dome," &c.

Bright rays which appear in the middle of the day, surpassing the brightness of the sun, and are supposed to foretel evil.

NOTE V. p. 335.

" Oh Kattragam, terrific deity!" &c.

The name of the Cingalese Spirit of Evil, or God of Destruction.

THE END.

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